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WILDERNESS RECOMMENDATIONS

EAGLE LAKE - CEDARVILLE STUDY AREAS

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

1987

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
CALIFORNIA

IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
CALIFORNIA STATE OFFICE
2800 Cottage Way
Sacramento, California 95825

WPC3000E

Enclosed is the final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) prepared for the Eagle Lake - Cedarville Study Areas in the Eagle Lake Resource Area and Surprise (formerly Cedarville) Resource Area of the Susanville District, California. The EIS includes 13 Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) and analyzes the impacts of adding 701,063 acres to the National Wilderness Preservation System. Partial Wilderness and No Wilderness alternatives are also considered. This Environmental Impact Statement was prepared pursuant to Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and responds to the mandate of Section 603 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 to review all public land roadless areas of 5,000 acres or more and roadless islands having wilderness characteristics; determine their suitability or nonsuitability for wilderness designation; and report these suitability recommendations to the President no later than October 21, 1991.

For further information please contact: District Manager, Susanville District, Bureau of Land Management, 805 Hall Street, Susanville, California 96130.

Sincerely,

Ed Hastey

Ed Hastey
State Director

#16187875

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
WILDERNESS RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR THE
EAGLE LAKE - CEDARVILLE STUDY AREAS

CA-020-311	Tunnison Mountain WSA	20,650 acres
CA-020-609	Five Springs WSA	48,460 acres
CA-020-612	Skedaddle Mountain WSA	63,790 acres
CA-020-615	Dry Valley Rim WSA	95,025 acres
CA-020-619	Buffalo Hills WSA	47,315 acres
CA-020-619A	Twin Peaks WSA	91,405 acres
CA-020-805	Wall Canyon WSA	45,790 acres
CA-020-913/NV-020-008	Little High Rock Canyon WSA	52,143 acres
CA-020-913A	Yellow Rock Canyon WSA	13,050 acres
CA-020-913B	High Rock Canyon WSA	33,985 acres
CA-020-914/NV-020-006A	East Fork High Rock Canyon WSA	55,320 acres
CA-020-1012	Sheldon Contiguous WSA	24,130 acres
CA-020-1013	Massacre Rim WSA	110,000 acres

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Prepared by
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Susanville District Office, California

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ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
WILDERNESS RECOMMENDATIONS
EAGLE LAKE/CEDARVILLE WSAs

Draft ( ) Final (X) Environmental Impact Statement

1. Type of Action: Administrative ( ) Legislative (X)

2. Abstract:

The Bureau of Land Management, Eagle Lake Resource Area and Surprise Resource Area, Susanville District California, has analyzed the impacts and resource trade-offs of the following proposals for thirteen wilderness study areas (WSA):

Tunnison Mountain WSA	Partial Wilderness
Five Springs WSA	No Wilderness/No Action
Skedaddle Mountain WSA	Partial Wilderness
Dry Valley Rim WSA	Partial Wilderness
Buffalo Hills WSA	No Wilderness/No Action
Twin Peaks WSA	Partial Wilderness
Wall Canyon WSA	No Wilderness/No Action
Little High Rock Canyon WSA	Partial Wilderness
Yellow Rock Canyon WSA	No Wilderness/No Action
High Rock Canyon WSA	Partial Wilderness
East Fork High Rock Canyon WSA	Partial Wilderness
Sheldon Contiguous WSA	Partial Wilderness
Massacre Rim WSA	Partial Wilderness

This environmental impact statement also analyzes the impacts and resource trade-offs of other alternatives including all wilderness, partial wilderness, and no wilderness/no action. Wilderness characteristics and special features are examined.

3. Location of Action:

Lassen County, California
Washoe County, Nevada
Humboldt County, Nevada

4. For Further Information Contact:

District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
805 Hall Street
Susanville, California 96130

SUMMARY

The Susanville District of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has prepared an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to determine the suitability of 13 Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System. These WSAs are located in the Eagle Lake and Surprise (formerly Cedarville) Resource Areas within the District. These WSAs cover 701,063 acres out of more than 2.8 million acres in the District. They are located in Lassen County, California, Washoe and Humboldt Counties in Nevada. Through a cooperative agreement with the Winnemucca, Nevada District, the Little High Rock Canyon and East fork High Rock Canyon WSAs, which overlap into that district, are analyzed in this document since a majority of those units are in the Susanville District.

This EIS has been prepared as part of the ongoing wilderness program that began with the passage of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) in 1976. Upon completion of the EIS, the Department of the Interior will recommend to the President, who after review will recommend to Congress, those areas to be included in the National Wilderness Preservation System.

The thirteen WSAs are being studied as amendments to the existing Management Framework Plans for the Cal-Neva, Willow Creek, Cowhead/Massacre, Tuledad/Home Camp, and Sonoma-Gerlach Planning Units.

Through the planning process and Technical Review Team process, the following proposed actions and alternatives were selected for analysis:

TUNNISON MOUNTAIN WSA (CA-020-311) 20,650 Acres

The Proposed Action for the Tunnison Mountain WSA is Partial Wilderness. Under this proposal 7,660 acres of the WSA will be designated wilderness while the remaining 12,990 acres will continue to be managed for multiple uses under the existing land use plans. Three alternatives were also considered -- an All Wilderness Alternative which would designate the entire 20,650 acre WSA as wilderness -- a Partial Wilderness Alternative designating 15,090 acres as wilderness and 5,560 acres as non-wilderness -- and a No Wilderness Alternative which would not designate any of the 20,650 acre WSA as wilderness.

Issues analyzed for Tunnison Mountain WSA include impacts on wilderness values, impacts on the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor, and impacts on recreational off road vehicle (ORV) use.

FIVE SPRINGS WSA (CA-020-609) 48,460 Acres

The Proposed Action for the Five Springs WSA is No Wilderness/No Action. Under this proposal none of the 48,460 acre WSA will be designated wilderness. The WSA will continue to be managed for multiple use under the existing land use plans. Two alternatives were also considered -- an

All Wilderness Alternative which would designate the entire 48,460 acre WSA as wilderness -- and a Partial Wilderness Alternative designating 25,174 acres as wilderness and the remaining 23,286 acres as non-wilderness.

Issues analyzed for the Five Springs WSA include impacts on wilderness values, impacts on recreational ORV use, impacts on the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor, and impacts on Endangered Species (Scutellaria holmgreniorum).

SKEDADDLE MOUNTAIN WSA (CA-020-612) 63,790 Acres

The Proposed Action for the Skedaddle Mountain WSA is Partial Wilderness. Under this proposal 37,240 acres of the WSA will be designated wilderness while the remaining 26,550 acres will continue to be managed for multiple use under the existing land use plans. Three alternatives were also considered -- an All Wilderness Alternative which would designate the entire 63,790 acre WSA as wilderness -- a Partial Wilderness Alternative designating 24,510 acres as wilderness and the remaining 39,280 acres as non-wilderness -- and a No Wilderness/No Action Alternative in which none of the 63,790 acres within the WSA would be designated wilderness.

Issues analyzed for the Skedaddle Mountain WSA include impacts on wilderness values, impacts on recreational ORV use, impacts on mineral resource development, impacts on geothermal development, impacts on the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor, and impacts on private waters.

DRY VALLEY RIM WSA (CA-020-615) 95,025 Acres

The Proposed Action for the Dry Valley Rim WSA is Partial Wilderness. Under this proposal 52,845 acres will be designated wilderness while the remaining 42,180 acres will continue to be managed for multiple use under the existing land use plans. Three alternatives were also considered -- an All Wilderness Alternative which would designate the entire 95,025 acre WSA as wilderness -- a Partial Wilderness Alternative designating 36,545 acres as wilderness and the remaining 58,480 acres as non-wilderness -- and a No Wilderness/No Action Alternative which would not designate any of the 95,025 acre WSA as wilderness.

Issues analyzed for the Dry Valley Rim WSA include impacts on wilderness values, impacts on recreational ORV use, impacts on mineral resource development, and impacts on the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor.

BUFFALO HILLS WSA (CA-020-619) 47,315 Acres

The Proposed Action for the Buffalo Hills WSA is No Wilderness/No Action. Under this proposal none of the 47,315 acres will be designated wilderness. The WSA will continue to be managed for multiple-use under the existing land use plans. Two alternatives were also considered -- an All Wilderness Alternative which would designate the entire 47,315 acre WSA as wilderness -- and a Partial Wilderness Alternative designating 23,230 acres wilderness
and the remaining 24,085 acres as non-wilderness.

Issues analyzed for the Buffalo Hills WSA include impacts on wilderness values and impacts on recreational ORV use.

TWIN PEAKS WSA (CA-020-619A) 91,405 Acres

The Proposed Action for the Twin Peaks WSA is Partial Wilderness. Under this proposal 54,970 acres will be designated wilderness while the remaining 36,435 acres will continue to be managed for multiple-use under the existing land use plans. Two alternatives were also considered -- an All Wilderness Alternative which would designate the entire 91,405 acre WSA as wilderness -- and a No Wilderness/No Action Alternative in which none of the 91,405 acre WSA would be designated wilderness.

Issues analyzed for the Twin Peaks WSA include impacts on wilderness values, impacts on recreational ORV use, and impacts on the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor.

WALL CANYON WSA (CA-020-805) 45,790 Acres

The Proposed Action for the Wall Canyon WSA is No Wilderness/No Action. Under this proposal none of the 45,790 acre WSA will be designated wilderness. The WSA will continue to be managed for multiple-use under the existing land use plans. Two alternatives were also considered -- an All Wilderness Alternative in which all 45,790 acres within the WSA would be designated wilderness -- and a Partial Wilderness Alternative designating 26,520 acres wilderness and the remaining 19,270 acres as non-wilderness.

Issues analyzed for the Wall Canyon WSA include impacts on wilderness values, impacts on recreational ORV use, and impacts on mineral resource development.

LITTLE HIGH ROCK CANYON WSA (CA-020-913 and NV-020-008) 52,143 Acres

The Proposed Action for the Little High Rock Canyon WSA is Partial Wilderness. Under this proposal 17,320 acres will be designated wilderness while the remaining 34,823 acres will continue to be managed under existing land use plans. Three alternatives were also considered -- an All Wilderness Alternative which would designate the entire 52,143 acres as wilderness -- a Partial Wilderness Alternative designating 45,643 acres as wilderness and the remaining 6,500 acres as non-wilderness -- and a No Wilderness/No Action Alternative which would not designate any of the 52,143 acre WSA as wilderness.

Issues analyzed for the Little High Rock Canyon WSA include impacts on wilderness values, impacts on grazing facility maintenance and construction, impacts on recreational ORV use, and impacts on mineral resource development.

YELLOW ROCK CANYON (CA-020-913A) 13,050 Acres

The Proposed Action for Yellow Rock Canyon is No Wilderness/No Action. Under this proposal none of the 13,050 acre WSA will be designated wilderness. The WSA will continue to be managed for multiple-uses under the existing land use plans. Two alternatives were also considered -- an All Wilderness Alternative which would designate the entire 13,050 acre

WSA as wilderness -- and a Partial Wilderness Alternative which would designate 6,390 acres as wilderness and the remaining 6,660 acres as non-wilderness.

Issues analyzed for the Yellow Rock Canyon WSA include impacts on wilderness values and impacts on recreational ORV use.

HIGH ROCK CANYON WSA (CA-020-913B) 33,985 Acres

The Proposed Action for the High Rock Canyon WSA is Partial Wilderness. Under this proposal 12,180 acres will be designated wilderness while the remaining 21,805 acres will continue to be managed for multiple-use under the existing land use plans. Two alternatives were also considered -- an All Wilderness Alternative which would designate the entire 33,985 acre WSA as wilderness -- and a No Wilderness/No Action Alternative which would not designate any of the 33,985 acre WSA as wilderness.

Issues analyzed for the High Rock Canyon WSA include impacts on wilderness values, impacts on recreational ORV use, impacts on mineral resource development and impacts on watershed control structures.

EAST FORK HIGH ROCK CANYON (CA-020-914/NV-020-006A) 55,320 Acres

The Proposed Action for the East Fork High Rock Canyon WSA is Partial Wilderness. Under this proposal 33,460 acres will be designated wilderness while the remaining 21,860 acres will continue to be managed for multiple-uses under the existing land use plans. Three alternatives were also considered -- an All Wilderness Alternative which would designate the entire 55,520 acre WSA as wilderness -- a Partial Wilderness Alternative designating 42,140 acres as wilderness and 13,180 acres as non-wilderness -- and a No Wilderness/ No Action alternative which would not designate any of the 55,320 acre WSA as wilderness.

Issues analyzed for the East Fork High Rock Canyon WSA include impacts on wilderness values, impacts on recreational ORV use, impacts on mineral resource development, impacts on wildlife management facilities, impacts on grazing facility maintenance and construction, impacts on watershed control structures, and impacts on wild horse and burro herd management.

SHELDON CONTIGUOUS WSA (CA-020-1012) 24,130 Acres

The Proposed Action for the Sheldon Contiguous WSA is Partial Wilderness. Under this proposal 780 acres will be designated wilderness while the remaining 23,350 acres will continue to be managed for multiple-use under the existing land use plans. Three alternatives were also considered -- an All Wilderness Alternative which would designate the entire 24,130 acre WSA as wilderness -- a Partial Wilderness Alternative designating 12,470 acres as wilderness and 11,660 acres as non-wilderness -- and a No Wilderness/No Action Alternative which would not designate any of the 24,130 acre WSA as wilderness.

Issues analyzed for the Sheldon Contiguous WSA include impacts on wilderness values, impacts on recreational ORV use, and impacts on grazing facility maintenance and construction.

MASSACRE RIM WSA (CA-020-1013) 110,000 Acres

The Proposed Action for the Massacre Rim WSA is Partial Wilderness. Under this proposal 23,260 acres of the WSA will be designated wilderness and the remaining 86,740 acres will continue to be managed for multiple-uses under the existing land use plans. Four alternatives were also considered -- an All Wilderness Alternative which would designate the entire 110,000 acre WSA as wilderness -- a Partial Wilderness Alternative "A" designating 91,170 acres as wilderness and 18,830 acres as non-wilderness -- a Partial Wilderness Alternative "B" designating 61,240 acres as wilderness and 48,760 acres as non-wilderness -- and a No Wilderness/No Action Alternative which would not designate any of the 110,000 acre WSA as wilderness.

Issues analyzed for the Massacre Rim WSA include impacts on wilderness values, impacts on recreational ORV use, impacts on mineral resource development, impacts on fuelwood cutting, impacts on archaeological excavations, and impacts on grazing facility maintenance and construction.

The Proposed Actions were recommended by three citizen advisory groups (Technical Review Team, Stewardship Committee, and District Advisory Council), using a consensus process on what WSAs or portions of the WSAs are most appropriate for wilderness designation and what WSAs or portions of the WSAs should not be recommended for wilderness designation. The BLM reviewed the recommendations and concurred with the selection of the Proposed Action.

The environmental effects of implementing the Proposed Action and Alternatives for each of the WSAs were analyzed. A Comparison of Impacts for the Proposed Action and Alternatives for each WSA is outlined in Tables 2-1 through 2-13 in Chapter 2.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) considers the possible consequences of wilderness designation, partial designation and nondesignation of thirteen Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) in the Eagle Lake and Surprise Resource Areas of the Susanville District, California and the Sonoma-Gerlach Resource Area of the Winnemucca District, Nevada.

Seven of the WSAs lie solely within Washoe and Humboldt Counties in Nevada.

CA-020-805	Wall Canyon WSA	45,790 acres
CA-020-913A/NV-020-008	Little High Rock Canyon WSA	52,143 acres
CA-020-913A	Yellow Rock Canyon WSA	13,050 acres
CA-020-913B	High Rock Canyon WSA	33,985 acres
CA-020-914/NV-020-006A	East Fork High Rock Canyon WSA	55,320 acres
CA-020-1012	Sheldon Contiguous WSA	24,130 acres
CA-020-1013	Massacre Rim WSA	110,000 acres

Four of the WSAs lie on the border within Washoe County, Nevada and Lassen County, California.

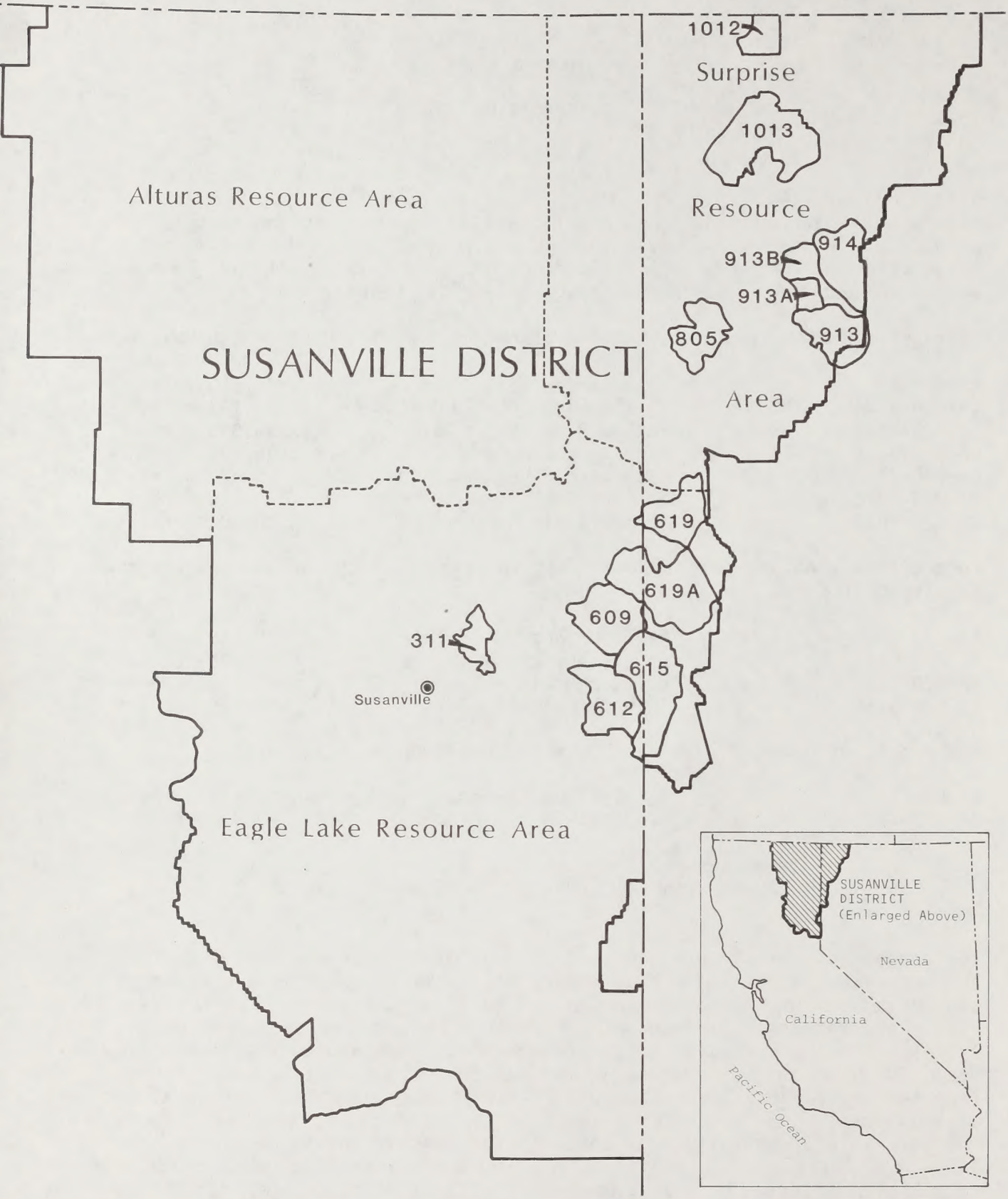
CA-020-609	Five Springs WSA	48,460 acres
CA-020-615	Dry Valley Rim WSA	95,025 acres
CA-020-619	Buffalo Hills WSA	47,315 acres
CA-020-619A	Twin Peaks WSA	91,405 acres

The remaining two WSAs lie solely within Lassen County, California.

CA-020-311	Tunnison Mountain WSA	20,650 acres
CA-020-612	Skedaddle Mountain WSA	63,790 acres

PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTIONS

The purpose of the proposal is to set forth the management action for the thirteen WSAs in the Eagle Lake-Cedarville study area. This evolves from a requirement included by Congress in Section 603 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) directing the Secretary of the Interior and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to review roadless areas of 5,000 acres or more having wilderness characteristics and by 1991 to recommend to the President the suitability of such areas for preservation as wilderness. In determining these wilderness values, the law directs the Bureau to use the criteria given by Congress in the Wilderness Act of 1964. In Section 2(c) of the Act, Congress states that wilderness is essentially an area of undeveloped Federal land in a natural condition, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation. The area may contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.



Introduction

General Location
MAP 1-1

THE WILDERNESS REVIEW PROCESS AND ITS INTEGRATION WITH PLANNING

To accomplish the mandate of Section 603 of FLPMA, the BLM developed a wilderness review process containing three phases: inventory, study, and reporting.

The inventory phase of this process, initiated in 1978, involved examining the public lands to determine and locate the existence of areas containing wilderness characteristics that met the criteria established in the Wilderness Act. Areas clearly lacking wilderness characteristics were sorted out from lands that might have those characteristics. This intensive inventory was then followed by a 90-day public review period, after which final WSAs were identified.

This inventory process and a general description of all of California's WSAs are given in Wilderness: Final Intensive Inventory, Public Lands Administered by BLM California Outside the California Desert Conservation Area (1979). A copy of this publication is available at any BLM office.

The second step in the review process was to integrate wilderness evaluation into the BLM Planning System (43 CFR 1600), which, in this case, involved amendments to Management Framework Plans (MFPs) for the Eagle Lake, Surprise, and Sonoma-Gerlach Resource Areas. The wilderness study criteria and quality standards containing the BLM's Wilderness Study Policy: Policies, Criteria and Guidelines for Conducting Wilderness Studies on Public Lands (47 CFR 5098-5122) were applied to each WSA.

In addition to the above referenced criteria and standards, issues for discussion were identified through public comment, and internal scoping, conflicts were analyzed and alternatives developed. See page 42 for a discussion of which alternatives were selected and why. These alternatives are the basis for analysis of environmental consequences and resource trade-offs.

Following public review of the draft environmental impact statement, the Susanville District, with State Director concurrence, prepared a final environmental impact statement and wilderness study report. These were reviewed by the BLM Director and the Secretary of the Interior, who filed this final EIS and who will make a recommendation to the President. The President has up to two years to make his final recommendation to Congress, which has sole authority to designate an area as wilderness. Until Congress decides whether or not to designate an area as wilderness, the WSAs will be managed in accordance with the Bureau's Interim Management Policy and Guidelines for Lands Under Wilderness Review (Department of the Interior, December 1979).

SCOPING

The Council on Environmental Quality Regulations Implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (40 CFR, Part 1501.7) and the BLM planning regulations (43 CFR 1610.4-1) require an early and open process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed and for identifying the significant issues related to a proposed action. Scoping determines in depth the scope

and the significant issues to be analyzed in the EIS and identifies and eliminates from detailed study insignificant issues or issues addressed in earlier environmental reviews. Scoping thus reduces the length of the EIS and emphasizes the real alternatives and impacts.

During this process, the scope and importance of issues related to the proposed action and alternatives were identified. Information obtained during the scoping process was one of the sources used to determine which impact topics would be addressed in detail in this EIS. Additional purposes of the scoping process are to inform affected Federal, state, and local agencies and other interested parties about the proposed project, and to identify existing environmental reports and information related to the impact assessment.

The scoping process involved discussions with the public and resource specialists and managers of BLM and other relevant agencies. Written comments were received and compiled as a result of Federal Register announcements, news releases, mailings, and articles about the proposal. Comments were also solicited during public meetings. In addition, the initial scoping effort has been followed by an effort to continue agency and public involvement throughout the development of this EIS. This section outlines the steps taken by BLM for the scoping and public involvement process for the EIS.

SCOPING PROCESS

A Notice of Intent to prepare the Eagle Lake/Cedarville Wilderness Study/EIS was published in the Federal Register on September 9, 1983 and filed with the California and Nevada State Clearinghouses.

On September 13, 1983, we sent a scoping letter requesting issue identification and interest in receiving future mailings about the Eagle Lake/Cedarville Wilderness Study/EIS to 387 individuals, groups and agencies. We received 36 replies.

Notice of Availability for the planning criteria for the Eagle Lake/Cedarville Wilderness Study/EIS published in the Federal Register on January 27, 1984. We received 21 requests for the planning criteria.

The District Advisory Council (DAC) suggested in October of 1983 that a Technical Review Team be formed to provide input to the BLM prior to development of the Draft EIS and proposed action. (See "Technical Review Team Process" on page 38.)

District Advisory Council approved the TRT recommendation and passed on the recommendation to the District Manager June 30, 1984.

Updates outlining progress to date on the Eagle Lake/Cedarville Wilderness Study EIS process were mailed to 372 individuals and organizations during April, June, and August 1984.

During the scoping period there was consultation with the California and Nevada State Historic Preservation Officers concerning the presence of cultural resources in the WSAs that would be eligible for listing on the "National Register of Historic Places." The United States Fish and Wildlife Service was consulted concerning the presence or absence of threatened or endangered species within the WSAs.

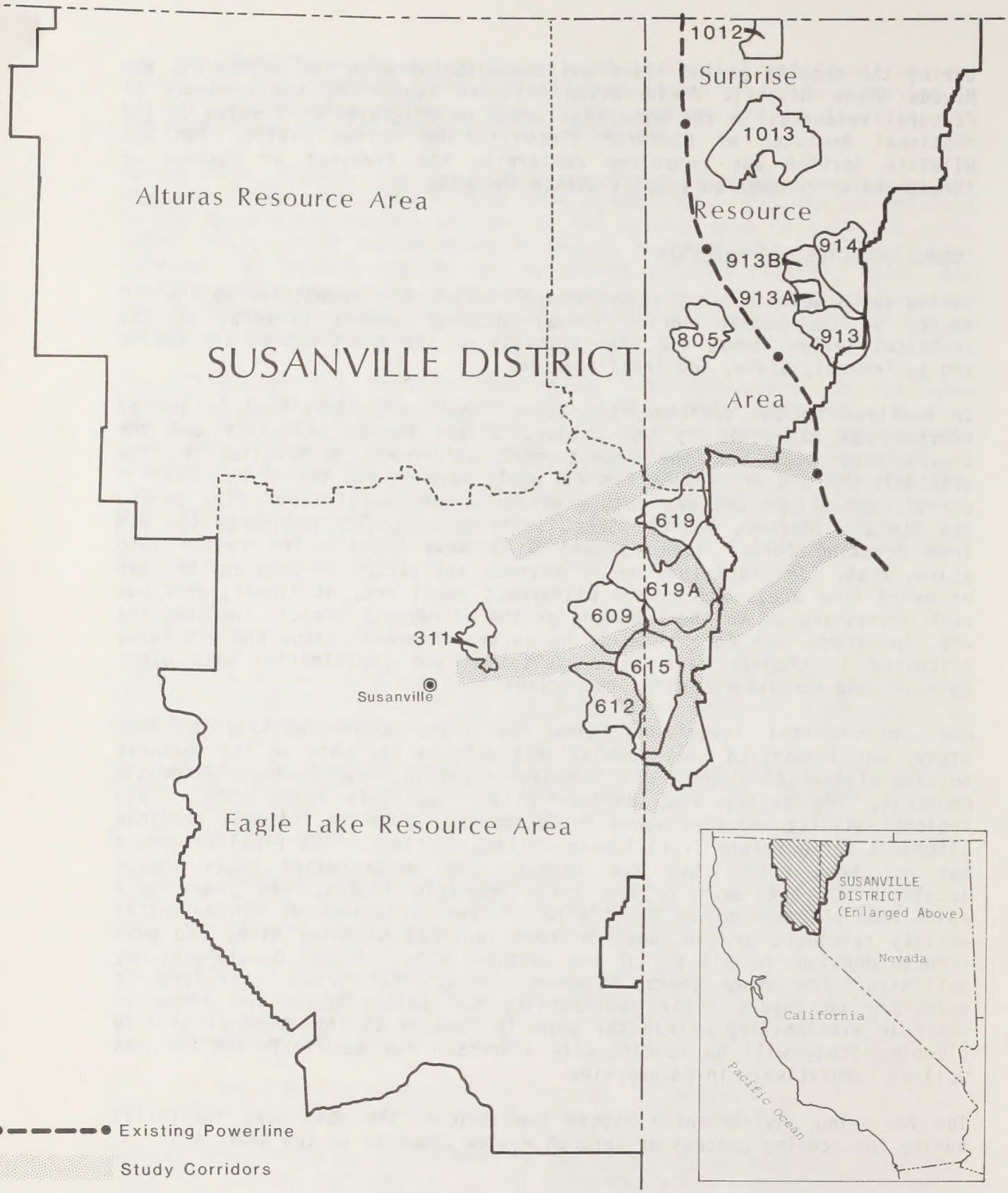
ISSUES SELECTED FOR ANALYSIS

During the scoping process environmental issues were identified by the BLM staff, by the public during formal scoping comment periods, by the Technical Review Teams, and from comments on the draft EIS by the public and by Federal, State, and local agencies.

In addition to the environmental issues that were identified, a lot of concern was expressed by the public, Lassen County officials and the Sierra Army Depot on the impact that wilderness designation in the Skedaddle WSA and Dry Valley Rim WSA would have on the Sierra Army Depot's current operations and any future expansion of operations on the Depot. The BLM's Wilderness Policy (Sept. 1981) specifically prohibits the BLM from creating buffer zones around wilderness areas. The Policy also states that, "The fact that non-wilderness activities or uses can be seen or heard from areas within the wilderness shall not, of itself, preclude such activities up to the boundary of the wilderness area." The concerns are, therefore, not determined to be an environmental issue and are fully discussed in Chapter Five as consultation and coordination with other agencies and consistency with other plans.

One environmental issue concerning the Trans Sierra utility corridor study, was identified that cumulatively affects six WSAs in the southern portion of the EIS study area; Tunnison Mountain, Five Springs, Skedaddle Mountain, Dry Valley Rim, Buffalo Hills, and Twin Peaks WSAs. This regional utility industry study is attempting to locate the most feasible alignment for a future Trans Sierra utility corridor. The final alignment has not been established and depends upon undetermined power source locations to the east in the Rocky Mountain states, and power grid connection points west of the Sierras. Five variations of two potential utility corridors are included in this regional planning study and pass through portions of all six of the southern WSAs. Actual development may not occur for many years, however, identification of corridors is necessary to insure their availability for future use. The issue of corridor availability within the WSAs in regards to the regional utility planning study will be specifically addressed for each affected WSA, as well as cumulatively in an overview.

The following environmental issues for each of the WSAs were identified during the scoping process or through review comments on the Draft EIS.



Introduction

Trans Sierra Utiuty Corridor Study

Regional Study Corridors from Sierra Pacific Power Company

MAP 1-2

TUNNISON MOUNTAIN WSA
(CA-020-311)

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude, opportunities for primitive recreation, and various special features of the WSA could benefit from wilderness designation. The same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that would occur should the WSA not be designated wilderness. The significance of the beneficial or adverse impacts is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor

Wilderness designation could affect the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor by precluding use of the WSA for an electric power transmission line. The impact of wilderness designation on the utility corridor is considered an issue for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Wilderness designation would eliminate the use of recreation off-road vehicles in the WSA. Eliminating this use could affect the availability of recreation opportunities particularly hunting, and shift ORV use currently occurring in the WSA to adjacent lands. The impact of wilderness designation on recreational ORV use in the vicinity of the WSA is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

FIVE SPRINGS WSA
(CA-020-609)

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude, opportunities for primitive recreation, and various special features of the WSA could benefit from wilderness designation. The same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that would occur should the WSA not be designated wilderness. The significance of the beneficial or adverse impacts is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Wilderness designation would eliminate the use of recreation off-road vehicles in the WSA. Eliminating this use could affect the availability of recreation opportunities particularly hunting, and shift ORV use currently occurring in the WSA to adjacent lands. The impact of wilderness designation on recreational ORV use in the vicinity of the WSA is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor

Wilderness designation could affect the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor by precluding use of the WSA for an electric power transmission line. The impact of wilderness designation on the utility corridor is considered an issue for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Endangered Species

Wildlife and vegetation inventories and consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service did not identify any threatened or endangered species in the Five Springs WSA. However, there is one known population in the WSA, and possibly others, of scutellaria holmgreniorum, a California Native Plant Society List Number 2 plant. Since it is the BLM's policy to manage for the protection of these plants as if they were threatened and endangered, impacts on these plants are an issue for analysis in the EIS.

SKEDADDLE MOUNTAIN WSA
(CA-020-612)

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude, opportunities for primitive recreation, and various special features of the WSA could benefit from wilderness designation. The same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that would occur should the WSA not be designated wilderness. The significance of the beneficial or adverse impacts is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Wilderness designation would eliminate the use of recreation off-road vehicles in the WSA. Eliminating this use could affect the availability of recreation opportunities particularly hunting, and shift ORV use currently occurring in the WSA to adjacent lands. The impact of wilderness designation on recreational ORV use in the vicinity of the WSA is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

Wilderness designation could affect the development of known and potential mineral resources in the WSA by withdrawing designated lands from mineral entry. The WSA does have one known sand and gravel deposit of commercial quality that could be precluded under wilderness designation. Although two mining claims that include lands both inside and outside the WSA do exist, the potential for development is low based on the lack of historic and current mining activities and visible evidence of mineral resources. Due to the presence of the sand and gravel this issue will be analyzed in the EIS.

Impacts on Geothermal Development

Geothermal resources within the Skedaddle Mountain WSA have been identified as "prospectively valuable." Additionally, 940 acres of the WSA lies within the Wendel Known Geothermal Resource Area (KGRA). While there has been no interest expressed concerning applications, leases, or exploration within the WSA, geothermal development activity is occurring two miles west of the WSA. Since there is a moderate potential for low intensive development, impacts on geothermal development are considered an issue for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor

Wilderness designation could affect the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor by precluding use of the WSA for an electric power transmission line. The impact of wilderness designation on the utility corridor is considered an issue for analysis in the EIS.

Impact on Private Waters

Some of the most reliable springs within the WSA occur on nine parcels of private land within and outside but adjacent to the WSA along cherrystem access roads in Skedaddle and Spencer Creek drainages. While BLM wilderness management policy does not restrict land owner access or use of inholdings, the owner of these parcels has expressed concern that wilderness users would be attracted to the private lands to utilize the reliable water on those lands. The landowner is concerned that public camping, littering and displaced livestock would result. This impact of wilderness users affects on privately owned waters is therefore an issue in the Skedaddle WSA considered for analysis in this EIS.

DRY VALLEY RIM
(CA-020-615)

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude, opportunities for primitive recreation, and various special features of the WSA could benefit from wilderness designation. The same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that would occur should the WSA not be designated wilderness. The significance of the beneficial or adverse impacts is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Wilderness designation would eliminate the use of recreation off-road vehicles in the WSA. Eliminating this use could affect the availability of recreation opportunities particularly hunting, and shift ORV use currently occurring in the WSA to adjacent lands. The impact of wilderness designation on recreational ORV use in the vicinity of the WSA is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

Wilderness designation could affect the development of known and potential mineral resources in the WSA by withdrawing designated lands from mineral entry. The WSA does have one known sand and gravel deposit of commercial quality as well as 5 claims on a potential diatomite deposit. Development of existing mineral resources within the WSA could be affected by wilderness management restrictions. The impact of wilderness designation on the development of mineral resources is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor

Wilderness designation could affect the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor by precluding use of the WSA for an electric power transmission line. The impact of wilderness designation on the utility corridor is considered an issue for analysis in the EIS.

BUFFALO HILLS WSA
(CA-020-619)

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude, opportunities for primitive recreation, and various special features of the WSA could benefit from wilderness designation. The same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that would occur should the WSA not be designated wilderness. The significance of the beneficial or adverse impacts is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Wilderness designation would eliminate the use of recreation off-road vehicles in the WSA. Eliminating this use could affect the availability of recreation opportunities particularly hunting, and shift ORV use currently occurring in the WSA to adjacent lands. The impact of wilderness designation on recreational ORV use in the vicinity of the WSA is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

TWIN PEAKS WSA
(CA-020-619A)

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude, opportunities for primitive recreation, and various special features of the WSA could benefit from wilderness designation. The same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that would occur should the WSA not be designated wilderness. The significance of the beneficial or adverse impacts is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Wilderness designation would eliminate the use of recreation off-road vehicles in the WSA. Eliminating this use could affect the availability of recreation opportunities particularly hunting, and shift ORV use currently occurring in the WSA to adjacent lands. The impact of wilderness designation on recreational ORV use in the vicinity of the WSA is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor

Wilderness designation could affect the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor by precluding use of the WSA for an electric power transmission line. The impact of wilderness designation on the utility corridor is considered an issue for analysis in the EIS.

WALL CANYON WSA
(CA-020-805)

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude, opportunities for primitive recreation, and various special features of the WSA could benefit from wilderness designation. The same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that would occur should the WSA not be designated wilderness. The significance of the beneficial or adverse impacts is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Wilderness designation would eliminate the use of recreation off-road vehicles in the WSA. Eliminating this use could affect the availability of recreation opportunities particularly hunting, and shift ORV use currently occurring in the WSA to adjacent lands. The impact of wilderness designation on recreational ORV use in the vicinity of the WSA is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

Wilderness designation could affect the development of potential and known mineral resources in the WSA by withdrawing designated lands from mineral entry. Development of existing mineral claims for precious metals within the WSA could be affected by wilderness management restrictions. The impact of wilderness designation on the development of potential and known mineral resources is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

LITTLE HIGH ROCK CANYON WSA
(CA-020-913/NV-020-008)

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude, opportunities for primitive recreation, and various special features of the WSA could benefit from wilderness designation. The same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that would occur should the WSA not be designated wilderness. The significance of the beneficial or adverse impacts is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Wilderness designation could affect livestock operations by precluding some planned range development projects or maintenance of existing projects necessary for utilization of forage at planned levels and to improve natural range conditions. The impact of wilderness designation on the maintenance and construction of grazing and range management projects in the WSA is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Wilderness designation would eliminate the use of recreation off-road vehicles in the WSA. Eliminating this use could affect the availability of recreation opportunities particularly hunting, and shift ORV use currently occurring in the WSA to adjacent lands. The impact of wilderness designation on recreational ORV use in the vicinity of the WSA is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

Wilderness designation could affect the development of mineral resources in the WSA by withdrawing designated lands from mineral entry. Development of existing mineral claims for precious metals within the WSA could be affected by wilderness management restrictions. The impact of wilderness designation on the development of mineral resources is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

YELLOW ROCK CANYON WSA
(CA-020-913A)

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude, opportunities for primitive recreation, and various special features of the WSA could benefit from wilderness designation. The same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that would occur should the WSA not be designated wilderness. The significance of the beneficial or adverse impacts is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Wilderness designation would eliminate the use of recreation off-road vehicles in the WSA. Eliminating this use could affect the availability of certain recreation opportunities particularly hunting, and shift ORV use currently occurring in the WSA to adjacent lands. The impact of wilderness designation on recreational ORV use in the vicinity of the WSA is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

HIGH ROCK CANYON WSA
(CA-020-913B)

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude, opportunities for primitive recreation, and various special features of the WSA could benefit from wilderness designation. The same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that would occur should the WSA not be designated wilderness. The significance of the beneficial or adverse impacts is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Wilderness designation would eliminate the use of recreation off-road vehicles in the WSA. Eliminating this use could affect the availability of certain recreation opportunities particularly hunting, and shift ORV use currently occurring in the WSA to adjacent lands. The impact of wilderness designation on recreational ORV use in the vicinity of the WSA is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

Wilderness designation could affect the development of known and potential mineral resources in the WSA by withdrawing designated lands from mineral entry. Existing exploration and potential development of mineral resources within the WSA could be affected by wilderness management restrictions. The impact of wilderness designation on the development of mineral resources is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Watershed Control Structures

Wilderness designation could affect the construction of planned peak flow control structures to reduce high volume flows. The impact on the construction and maintenance of watershed control structures in the High Rock Canyon WSA is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude, opportunities for primitive recreation, and various special features of the WSA could benefit from wilderness designation. The same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that would occur should the WSA not be designated wilderness. The significance of the beneficial or adverse impacts is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Wilderness designation would eliminate the use of recreation off-road vehicles in the WSA. Eliminating this use could affect the availability of recreation opportunities particularly hunting, and shift ORV use currently occurring in the WSA to adjacent lands. The impact of wilderness designation on recreational ORV use in the vicinity of the WSA is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

Wilderness designation could affect the development of known and potential mineral resources in the WSA by withdrawing designated lands from mineral entry. While there are no mining claims in the WSA at this time, mineral values are considered high for locatable minerals in portions of the WSA. Therefore, the impacts on mineral resource are an issue for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Wildlife Management Facilities

Wilderness designation could affect the construction of water reservoirs for summering antelope and wild horses. The impact on development of wildlife management facilities in the East Fork High Rock Canyon WSA is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Wilderness designation could affect livestock operations by precluding some planned range development projects or maintenance of existing projects necessary for utilization of forage at planned levels and to improve natural range conditions. The impact of wilderness designation on the maintenance and construction of grazing and range management projects in the WSA is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Watershed Control Structures

Wilderness designation could affect the construction of planned peak flow control structures to reduce high volume flows. The impact on the construction and maintenance of watershed control structures in the East Fork High Rock Canyon WSA is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

Wild Horse and Burro Herd Management

Wild horse and burro herd management could be affected by wilderness designation. The access way that leads just over three miles to a trap location at Bernards Corral requires periodic maintenance to rebuild wash crossings at several locations. This is necessary for trucks to carry in the portable corrals and carry the captured animals out. As the maintenance of the way would not be permissible if the WSA was designated as wilderness, the impact on wild horse and burro herd management is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

SHELDON CONTIGUOUS WSA
(CA-020-1012)

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude, opportunities for primitive recreation, and various special features of the WSA could benefit from wilderness designation. The same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that would occur should the WSA not be designated wilderness. The significance of the beneficial or adverse impacts is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Wilderness designation would eliminate the use of recreation off-road vehicles in the WSA. Eliminating this use could affect the availability of recreation opportunities particularly hunting, and shift ORV use currently occurring in the WSA to adjacent lands. The impact of wilderness designation on recreational ORV use in the vicinity of the WSA is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

MASSACRE RIM WSA
(CA-020-1013)

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude, opportunities for primitive recreation, and various special features of the WSA could benefit from wilderness designation. The same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that would occur should the WSA not be designated wilderness. The significance of the beneficial or adverse impacts is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Wilderness designation would eliminate the use of recreation off-road vehicles in the WSA. Eliminating this use could affect the availability of recreation opportunities particularly hunting, and shift ORV use

currently occurring in the WSA to adjacent lands. The impact of wilderness designation on recreational ORV use in the vicinity of the WSA is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

Wilderness designation could affect the development of known and potential mineral resources in the WSA by withdrawing designated lands from mineral entry. Development of potential metallic mineral resources within the WSA could be affected by wilderness management restrictions. The impact of wilderness designation on the development of mineral resources is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Fuelwood Cutting

Wilderness designation would not permit the cutting of fuelwood, specifically the juniper forest, in the western half of the Massacre Rim. This is an important cutting area for local residents. The impacts on fuelwood cutting are an issue for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Archeological Excavations

Wilderness designation could restrict certain cultural resource management activities, particularly excavations. Extensive archeological surveys in the WSA have revealed exceptionally rich cultural values in the Massacre Rim which include seven archeological districts for potential nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. Due to the high cultural values, there is a current interest in large scale excavations by professional archaeologists. Impacts on archeological excavations are an issue for detailed analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Wilderness designation could affect livestock operations by precluding some planned range development projects or maintenance of existing projects necessary for utilization of forage at planned levels and to improve natural range conditions. The impact of wilderness designation on the maintenance and construction of grazing and range management projects in the WSA is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

ISSUES CONSIDERED BUT DROPPED FROM FURTHER ANALYSIS

The following issues were identified in scoping but were not selected for detailed analysis in this EIS. The reasons for setting each of these issues aside are discussed below.

Impacts on Mineral and Energy Resource Development

Development of mineral resources within designated wilderness areas could be affected by wilderness management restrictions. However, the potential for mineral resources is considered low and no mining claims exist in the WSA. While geothermal resources are considered "prospectively valuable," there has been no interest expressed concerning applications, leases, or exploration. Therefore this issue was dropped from further consideration.

Impacts on Water Quality

The issue of how water quality would be affected by wilderness designation or nondesignation in the WSA was identified by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). This was not considered in this EIS because the primary influence on water quality in this WSA, livestock use, would not vary sufficiently with or without wilderness designation to affect water quality. Other existing or potential activities such as mineral developement are absent or affect such a small area that their influence on water quality would be negligible.

Impact on Threatened or Endangered Species

Wildlife and vegetation inventories and consultation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service did not identify any threatened or endangered species in the WSA. Therefore this issue was dropped from further consideration.

Impacts on Livestock Grazing and Range Management

Concerns were raised that livestock operators could be required to modify their operations within designated wilderness in a manner that would have significant adverse impact on livestock grazing. This issue was considered but dropped because the BLM's wilderness management policy provides for the continued use of wilderness areas for livestock operations at historic levels. Although the management practices of livestock operators in the WSAs would be more closely regulated, they would continue as they did prior to wilderness designations subject to reasonable regulations. The few proposed range improvements are small scale and similar to existing improvements. The wilderness management policy allows these types of improvements in order to continue the existing livestock program. While this issue has been dropped from analysis, a brief description of the planned livestock program has been included because this is a significant nonconforming use which is specifically allowed by Congress. It is anticipated that the numbers of livestock permitted to graze in wilderness areas would remain at the approximate levels existing at the time an area enters the wilderness system. If land management plans reveal conclusively that increased livestock numbers or animal unit months (AUMs) could be made available with no adverse impact on wilderness values such as plant communities, primitive recreation, and wildlife populations or habitat, some increases in AUMs may be permissible. This is not to imply, however, that

wilderness lends itself to AUM or livestock increases and construction of substantial new facilities that might be appropriate for intensive grazing management in non-wilderness areas.

Impacts on Wildlife

An issue dealing with wildlife in general was considered but not included in this EIS because no specific impacts on populations or the habitat of any specific species were identified, based on the projections of development in the WSA. Little or no change in wildlife populations or habitat is anticipated with wilderness designation or nondesignation.

Impacts on Cultural Resources

Cultural resource inventories and consultation with the California State Historic Preservation Office identified areas of high archeological values including several sites with potential National Register quality including petroglyphs, caves and habitation sites found in Willow Creek Canyon. The archeological sites that do exist in the area would be protected from grazing by fencing with or without wilderness designation. There are no plans or identified future need to excavate any sites in the WSA. The areas of moderate potential north of Willow Creek Canyon are naturally protected by rough terrain. Since the management of cultural resources would not vary significantly, with or without wilderness designation, the issue of impacts on cultural resources was dropped from further analysis.

Impacts on Private Inholdings

The issue of wilderness designation or nondesignation on private land inholdings was considered because of the potential for development of private inholdings in Tunnison Mountain WSA as recreational homesites or hunting camps. The uses on these lands would not change as a result of designation or nondesignation because the BLM's wilderness management policy assures adequate access to serve the reasonable purposes for which the private land is held or used while causing the least lasting impact on the wilderness resource. Therefore, impacts on private inholding was not considered for further analysis.

FIVE SPRINGS WSA
(CA-020-609)

Impact on Water Quality

The issue of how water quality would be affected by wilderness designation or nondesignation in the Five Springs WSA was identified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. This issue was not selected for analysis in the EIS because the primary influence on water quality in the WSA, livestock use, would not vary sufficiently with or without wilderness designation to affect water quality in the WSA. Other existing or potential activities, such as mineral development, are absent or affect such a small area that their influence on water quality would be negligible.

Impacts on Wildlife

An issue dealing with wildlife in general was considered but not included in this EIS because no specific impacts on populations or the habitat of any specific species were identified, based on the projections of development in the WSA. Little or no change in wildlife populations or habitat is anticipated with wilderness designation or nondesignation.

Impacts on Cultural Resources

Cultural resource inventories and consultation with the California and Nevada State Historic Preservation Offices identified areas of high archeological values including several districts of potential National Register quality. The archeological sites that do exist in the area would be protected with or without wilderness designation. There aren't any plans or an identified future need to excavate any of these sites. The national register quality sites are located on the southwestern flank of the WSA. As they are located close to the boundary of the WSA, their accessibility would not change appreciably with wilderness designation. Since the management of cultural resources would not vary significantly, with or without wilderness designation, the issue of impacts on cultural resources was dropped from further analysis.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

Wilderness designation could affect the development of known and potential mineral resources in the WSA by withdrawing designated lands from mineral entry. Development of existing mineral resources within the WSA could be affected by wilderness management restrictions. However, the potential for mineral resources is considered low and no mining claims exist in the WSA. Although oil and gas leases have been issued in the WSA, the potential for oil and gas resources is considered low and no surface disturbing exploration activities have occurred. Leases in nearby areas have been allowed to expire without any activity. Therefore, impacts on the development of mineral resources were dropped from further consideration.

Impacts on Livestock Grazing and Range Management

Concerns were raised that livestock operators could be required to modify their operations within designated wilderness in a manner that would have significant adverse impact on livestock grazing. This issue was considered but dropped because the BLM's wilderness management policy provides for the continued use of wilderness areas for livestock operations at historic levels. Although the management practices of livestock operators in the WSAs would be more closely regulated, they would continue as they did prior to wilderness designations subject to reasonable regulations. The few proposed range improvements are small scale and similar to existing improvements. The wilderness management policy allows these types of improvements in order to continue the existing livestock program. While this issue has been dropped from analysis, a brief description of the planned livestock program has been included because this is a significant nonconforming use which is specifically allowed by Congress. It is anticipated that the numbers of

livestock permitted to graze in wilderness areas would remain at the approximate levels existing at the time an area enters the wilderness system. If land management plans reveal conclusively that increased livestock numbers or animal unit months (AUMs) could be made available with no adverse impact on wilderness values such as plant communities, primitive recreation, and wildlife populations or habitat, some increases in AUMs may be permissible. This is not to imply, however, that wilderness lends itself to AUM or livestock increases and construction of substantial new facilities that might be appropriate for intensive grazing management in non-wilderness areas.

Impacts on Predator Control

The issue of how predator control activities for domestic sheep grazing would be affected by wilderness designation was identified by the ranching community. Existing policy recognizes predator control may be required on federal lands, both wilderness and non-wilderness, to prevent excessive losses to livestock. Acceptable control methods are to be directed at eliminating the offending individual animals by trapping and aerial control. Poisons would not be allowed in wilderness areas. In this WSA toxicants are not being used and past activities have shown them to be ineffective during the period of control activities. Since activities for predator control could continue without significant modification, with or without wilderness designation, this issue was dropped from further consideration.

SKEDADDLE MOUNTAIN WSA
(CA-020-612)

Impact on Water Quality

The issue of how water quality would be affected by wilderness designation or nondesignation in the Skedaddle Mountain WSA was identified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. This issue was not selected for analysis in the EIS because the primary influence on water quality in the WSA, livestock use, would not vary sufficiently with or without wilderness designation to affect water quality in the WSA. Other existing or potential activities, such as mineral development, are absent or affect such a small area that their influence on water quality would be negligible.

Impacts Threatened or Endangered Species

Wildlife and vegetation inventories and consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service did not identify any threatened or endangered species in the Skedaddle Mountain WSA. Therefore, this issue was dropped from further consideration.

Impact on the Reintroduction of Bighorn Sheep

The reintroduction of Bighorn Sheep, if it occurs, would be independent of the designation of the Skedaddle Mountain WSA as wilderness since the

wilderness management policy provides guidelines for reintroduction of native wildlife species. This issue was not selected for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Wildlife

An issue dealing with wildlife in general was considered but not included in this EIS because no specific impacts on populations or the habitat of any specific species were identified, based on the projections of development in the WSA. Little or no change in wildlife populations or habitat is anticipated with wilderness designation or nondesignation.

Impacts on Cultural Resources

Cultural resource inventories and consultation with the California and Nevada State Historic Preservation Offices identified areas of high archeological values including seventeen sites of potential National Register quality. The archeological sites that do exist in the area would be protected with or without wilderness designation. There aren't any plans or an identified future need to excavate any sites in the WSA. The areas of moderate potential north of Willow Creek Canyon are naturally protected from potential impacts resulting from ORVs and other use due to rough terrain. Since the management of cultural resources would not vary significantly, with or without wilderness designation, the issue of impacts on cultural resources was dropped from further analysis.

Impacts on Private Inholdings

The impact of wilderness designation or nondesignation on private land inholdings was dropped from further consideration because the uses on these lands would not change as a result of designation or nondesignation.

Additionally, the BLM's wilderness management policy assures adequate access to serve the reasonable purposes for which the private land is held or used while causing the least lasting impact on the wilderness resource. Therefore, impacts on private inholding was not considered for further analysis.

Impacts on Sierra Army Depot Operations

The U.S. Army has expressed concerns that Wilderness designation of the Skedaddle Mountain WSA could affect their operations at the Sierra Army Depot. Wilderness designation or nondesignation would not affect operations at the depot. The BLM's wilderness management policies would not curtail the Sierra Army Depot operations including demolition of ammunition. Activities within the depot would continue and could be expanded regardless of wilderness designation. Specifically, the BLM would not modify standards for air quality, noise, or smell. Security access could continue on a justified need basis. The Sierra Army Depot would be directly consulted in the development of any management plans for the WSA. Therefore, impacts on the Sierra Army Depot operations are not considered an environmental issue for further analysis in the EIS.

The concerns of how wilderness designation affects the Sierra Army Depot is covered in Chapter 5 under consultation, coordination and consistency with other plans.

Impacts on Livestock Grazing and Range Management

Concerns were raised that livestock operators could be required to modify their operations within designated wilderness in a manner that would have significant adverse impact on livestock grazing. This issue was considered but dropped because the BLM's wilderness management policy provides for the continued use of wilderness areas for livestock operations at historic levels. Although the management practices of livestock operators in the WSAs would be more closely regulated, they would continue as they did prior to wilderness designations subject to reasonable regulations. The few proposed range improvements are small scale and similar to existing improvements. The wilderness management policy allows these types of improvements in order to continue the existing livestock program. While this issue has been dropped from analysis, a brief description of the planned livestock program has been included because this is a significant nonconforming use which is specifically allowed by Congress. It is anticipated that the numbers of livestock permitted to graze in wilderness areas would remain at the approximate levels existing at the time an area enters the wilderness system. If land management plans reveal conclusively that increased livestock numbers or animal unit months (AUMs) could be made available with no adverse impact on wilderness values such as plant communities, primitive recreation, and wildlife populations or habitat, some increases in AUMs may be permissible. This is not to imply, however, that wilderness lends itself to AUM or livestock increases and construction of substantial new facilities that might be appropriate for intensive grazing management in non-wilderness areas.

Wild Horse and Burro Herd Management

Wild horse and burro herd management could be affected by wilderness designation. However, the BLM's Wilderness Management Policies provide guidelines that would be effective in the Skedaddle Mountain WSA. The current trap site is located within one-half mile of the WSA boundary and has established access. The use of portable corrals, helicopters for herding, and trucks for carrying materials and animals is considered to be an effective and minimum method necessary for gathering wild horses and burros to maintain herd size as outlined in the Herd Area Management Plan (HAMP). Since these methods are considered permissible in the BLM's Wilderness Management Policy, impacts on wild horse and burro herd management is not an issue considered for further analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Predator Control

The issue of how predator control activities for domestic sheep grazing would be affected by wilderness designation was identified by the ranching community. Existing policy recognizes predator control may be required on federal lands, both wilderness and non-wilderness, to prevent excessive losses to livestock. Acceptable control methods are to be directed at eliminating the offending individual animals by trapping and aerial control. Poisons would not be allowed in wilderness areas. In this WSA toxicants are not being used and past activities have shown them to be ineffective during the period of control activities. Since activities for

predator control could continue without significant modification, with or without wilderness designation, this issue was dropped from further consideration.

DRY VALLEY RIM WSA
(CA-020-615)

Impact on Water Quality

The issue of how water quality would be affected by wilderness designation or nondesignation in the Dry Valley Rim WSA was identified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. This issue was not selected for analysis in the EIS because the primary influence on water quality in the WSA, livestock use, would not vary sufficiently with or without wilderness designation to affect water quality in the WSA. Other existing or potential activities, such as mineral development, are absent or affect such a small area that their influence on water quality would be negligible.

Impacts on Geothermal Development

Geothermal resources within the Dry Valley Rim WSA have been identified as "prospectively valuable." While there is a low potential for low intensive geothermal development, there has been no interest expressed concerning applications, lease, or exploration. Therefore, the issue of impacts on geothermal development was dropped from further analysis.

Impact on Threatened or Endangered Species

Wildlife and vegetation inventories and consultation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service did not identify any threatened or endangered species in the Dry Valley Rim WSA. Therefore this issue was dropped from further consideration.

Impacts on Wildlife

An issue dealing with wildlife in general was considered but not included in this EIS because no specific impacts on populations or the habitat of any specific species were identified, based on the projections of development in the WSA. Little or no change in wildlife populations or habitat is anticipated with wilderness designation or nondesignation.

Impacts on Cultural Resources

Cultural resource inventories and consultation with the California and Nevada State Historic Preservation Offices identified areas of high archeological values including a high potential for National Register quality sites. The archeological sites that do exist in the area would be protected with or without wilderness designation. Since the management of cultural resources would not vary significantly, with or without wilderness designation, the issue of impacts on cultural resources was dropped from further analysis.

Impacts on Private Inholdings

The impact of wilderness designation or nondesignation on private land inholdings was dropped from further consideration because the uses on these lands would not change as a result of designation or nondesignation.

Additionally, the BLM's wilderness management policy assures adequate access to serve the reasonable purposes for which the private land is held or used while causing the least lasting impact on the wilderness resource. Therefore, impacts on private inholding was not considered for further analysis.

Impacts on Livestock Grazing and Range Management

Concerns were raised that livestock operators could be required to modify their operations within designated wilderness in a manner that would have significant adverse impact on livestock grazing. This issue was considered but dropped because the BLM's wilderness management policy provides for the continued use of wilderness areas for livestock operations at historic levels. Although the management practices of livestock operators in the WSAs would be more closely regulated, they would continue as they did prior to wilderness designations subject to reasonable regulations. The few proposed range improvements are small scale and similar to existing improvements. The wilderness management policy allows these types of improvements in order to continue the existing livestock program. While this issue has been dropped from analysis, a brief description of the planned livestock program has been included because this is a significant nonconforming use which is specifically allowed by Congress. It is anticipated that the numbers of livestock permitted to graze in wilderness areas would remain at the approximate levels existing at the time an area enters the wilderness system. If land management plans reveal conclusively that increased livestock numbers or animal unit months (AUMs) could be made available with no adverse impact on wilderness values such as plant communities, primitive recreation, and wildlife populations or habitat, some increases in AUMs may be permissible. This is not to imply, however, that wilderness lends itself to AUM or livestock increases and construction of substantial new facilities that might be appropriate for intensive grazing management in non-wilderness areas.

Wild Horse and Burro Herd Management

Wild horse and burro herd management could be affected by wilderness designation. However, the BLM's Wilderness Management Policies provide guidelines that would be effective in the Dry Valley Rim WSA. The current trap site is located within one-half mile of the WSA boundary and has established access. The use of portable corrals, helicopters for herding, and trucks for carrying materials and animals is considered to be an effective and minimum method necessary for gathering wild horses and burros to maintain herd size as outlined in the Herd Area Management Plan (HAMP). Since these methods are considered permissible in the BLM's Wilderness Management Policy, impacts on wild horse and burro herd management is not an issue considered for further analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Predator Control

The issue of how predator control activities for domestic sheep grazing would be affected by wilderness designation was identified by the ranching community. Existing policy recognizes predator control may be required on federal lands, both wilderness and non-wilderness, to prevent excessive losses to livestock. Acceptable control methods are to be directed at eliminating the offending individual animals by trapping and aerial control. Poisons would not be allowed in wilderness areas. In this WSA toxicants are not being used and past activities have shown them to be ineffective during the period of control activities. Since activities for predator control could continue without significant modification, with or without wilderness designation, this issue was dropped from further consideration.

BUFFALO HILLS WSA
(CA-020-619)

Impact on Water Quality

The issue of how water quality would be affected by wilderness designation or nondesignation in the Dry Valley Rim WSA was identified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. This issue was not selected for analysis in the EIS because the primary influence on water quality in the WSA, livestock use, would not vary sufficiently with or without wilderness designation to affect water quality in the WSA. Other existing or potential activities, such as mineral development, are absent or affect such a small area that their influence on water quality would be negligible.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

Development of mineral resources within the designated wilderness areas could be affected by wilderness management restrictions. However, the potential for mineral resources is considered low and no mining claims exist in the WSA. While the potential for oil and gas resources is unknown, oil and gas leases within the WSA have been allowed to lapse by the lessees, indicating that the leasing may have been speculative. Therefore, this issue was dropped from further consideration.

Impact on Threatened or Endangered Species

Wildlife and vegetation inventories and consultation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service did not identify any threatened or endangered species in the Buffalo HIlls WSA. Therefore this issue was dropped from further consideration.

Impacts on Wildlife

An issue dealing with wildlife in general was considered but not included in this EIS because no specific impacts on populations or the habitat of any specific species were identified, based on the projections of development in the WSA. Little or no change in wildlife populations or habitat is anticipated with wilderness designation or nondesignation.

Impacts on Private Inholdings

The impact of wilderness designation or nondesignation on private land inholdings was dropped from further consideration because the uses on these lands would not change as a result of designation or non-designation. Additionally, the BLM's wilderness management policy assures adequate access to serve the reasonable purposes for which the private land is held or used while causing the least lasting impact on the wilderness resource. Therefore, impacts on private inholding was not considered for further analysis.

Impacts on Cultural Resources

Cultural resource inventories and consultation with the California and Nevada State Historic Preservation Offices identified areas of high archeological values including a high potential for National Register quality sites. The archeological sites that do exist in the area would be protected with or without wilderness designation. There aren't any plans or an identified future need to excavate any sites in the WSA. The areas with high potential for national register sites are either inaccessible to vehicles (Painter's Creek and Section 22 north of Antelope Basin) due to rugged rocky topography or located close to the WSA boundary (Antelope Basin). The accessibility of these areas would not change appreciably with wilderness designation. Since the management of cultural resources would not vary significantly, with or without wilderness designation, the issue of impacts on cultural resources was dropped from further analysis.

Impacts on Livestock Grazing and Range Management

Concerns were raised that livestock operators could be required to modify their operations within designated wilderness in a manner that would have significant adverse impact on livestock grazing. This issue was considered but dropped because the BLM's wilderness management policy provides for the continued use of wilderness areas for livestock operations at historic levels. Although the management practices of livestock operators in the WSAs would be more closely regulated, they would continue as they did prior to wilderness designations subject to reasonable regulations. The few proposed range improvements are small scale and similar to existing improvements. The wilderness management policy allows these types of improvements in order to continue the existing livestock program. While this issue has been dropped from analysis, a brief description of the planned livestock program has been included because this is a significant nonconforming use which is specifically allowed by Congress. It is anticipated that the numbers of livestock permitted to graze in wilderness areas would remain at the approximate levels existing at the time an area enters the wilderness system. If land management plans reveal conclusively that increased livestock numbers or animal unit months (AUMs) could be made available with no adverse impact on wilderness values such as plant communities, primitive recreation, and wildlife populations or habitat, some increases in AUMs may be permissible. This is not to imply, however, that wilderness lends itself to AUM or livestock increases and construction of substantial new facilities that might be appropriate for intensive grazing management in non-wilderness areas.

Wild Horse and Burro Herd Management

Wild horse and burro herd management could be affected by wilderness designation. However, the BLM's Wilderness Management Policies provide guidelines that would be effective in the Buffalo Hills WSA. The current trap site is located at the end of a cherrystem road on the WSA boundary. The use of portable corrals, helicopters for herding, and trucks for carrying materials and animals is considered to be an effective and minimum method necessary for gathering wild horses and burros to maintain herd size as outlined in the Herd Area Management Plan (HAMP). Since these methods are considered permissible in the BLM's Wilderness Management Policy, impacts on wild horse and burro herd management is not an issue considered for further analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Predator Control

The issue of how predator control activities for domestic sheep grazing would be affected by wilderness designation was identified by the ranching community. Existing policy recognizes predator control may be required on federal lands, both wilderness and non-wilderness, to prevent excessive losses to livestock. Acceptable control methods are to be directed at eliminating the offending individual animals by trapping and aerial control. Poisons would not be allowed in wilderness areas. In this WSA toxicants are not being used and past activities have shown them to be ineffective during the period of control activities. Since activities for predator control could continue without significant modification, with or without wilderness designation, this issue was dropped from further consideration.

TWIN PEAKS WSA
(CA-020-619A)

Impact on Water Quality

The issue of how water quality would be affected by wilderness designation or non-designation in the Twin Peaks WSA was identified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. This issue was not selected for analysis in the EIS because the primary influence on water quality in the WSA, livestock use, would not vary sufficiently with or without wilderness designation to affect water quality in the WSA. Other existing or potential activities, such as mineral development, are absent or affect such a small area that their influence on water quality would be negligible.

Impact on Threatened or Endangered Species

Wildlife and vegetation inventories and consultation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service did not identify any threatened or endangered species in the Twin Peaks WSA. Therefore this issue was dropped from further consideration.

Impacts on Cultural Resources

Cultural resource inventories and consultation with the California and Nevada State Historic Preservation Offices identified areas of high archeological values including the Smoke Creek National Register District. The archeological sites that do exist in the area would be protected with or without wilderness designation. There aren't any plans or an identified future need to excavate any sites in the WSA. The Smoke Creek National Register District is located parallel to a WSA boundary road with the canyon being either immediately adjacent to or up to less than a mile from the road. The canyon itself is inaccessible to vehicles due to it steep rocky walls. The overall accessiblity of the district would not change with wilderness desigantion. Since the management of cultural resources would not vary significantly, with or without wilderness designation, the issue of impacts on cultural resources was dropped from further analysis.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

Development of mineral resources within designated wilderness areas could be affected by wilderness management restrictions. However, the potential for mineral resources is considered low and no mining claims exist in the WSA. While the potential for oil and gas resources is unknown, oil and gas leases within the WSA have been allowed to lapse by the lessees, indicating that the leasing may have been speculative. Sand and gravel deposits located in the WSA are too far from any potential users to be usable. Therefore, this issue was dropped from further consideration.

Impacts on Wildlife

An issue dealing with wildlife in general was considered but not included in this EIS because no specific impacts on populations or the habitat of any specific species were identified, based on the projections of development in the WSA. The only proposed development of fencing cattle out of Smoke Creek Canyon and restoring native streambank vegetation is consistent with wildlife habitat activities allowed in the BLM Wilderness Management Policy. Little or no change in wildlife populations or habitat is anticipated with wilderness designation or nondesignation.

Impacts on Livestock Grazing and Range Management

Concerns were raised that livestock operators could be required to modify their operations within designated wilderness in a manner that would have significant adverse impact on livestock grazing. This issue was considered but dropped because the BLM's wilderness management policy provides for the continued use of wilderness areas for livestock operations at historic levels. Although the management practices of livestock operators in the WSAs would be more closely regulated, they would continue as they did prior to wilderness designations subject to reasonable regulations. The few proposed range improvements are small scale and similar to existing improvements. The wilderness management policy allows these types of improvements in order to continue the existing livestock program. While this issue has been dropped from analysis, a brief description of the planned livestock program has been

included because this is a significant nonconforming use which is specifically allowed by Congress. It is anticipated that the numbers of livestock permitted to graze in wilderness areas would remain at the approximate levels existing at the time an area enters the wilderness system. If land management plans reveal conclusively that increased livestock numbers or animal unit months (AUMs) could be made available with no adverse impact on wilderness values such as plant communities, primitive recreation, and wildlife populations or habitat, some increases in AUMs may be permissible. This is not to imply, however, that wilderness lends itself to AUM or livestock increases and construction of substantial new facilities that might be appropriate for intensive grazing management in non-wilderness areas.

Impacts on Predator Control

The issue of how predator control activities for domestic sheep grazing would be affected by wilderness designation was identified by the ranching community. Existing policy recognizes predator control may be required on federal lands, both wilderness and non-wilderness, to prevent excessive losses to livestock. Acceptable control methods are to be directed at eliminating the offending individual animals by trapping and aerial control. Poisons would not be allowed in wilderness areas. In this WSA toxicants are not being used and past activities have shown them to be ineffective during the period of control activities. Since activities for predator control could continue without significant modification, with or without wilderness designation, this issue was dropped from further consideration.

WALL CANYON WSA
(CA-020-805)

Impacts on Livestock Grazing and Range Management

Concerns were raised that livestock operators could be required to modify their operations within designated wilderness in a manner that would have significant adverse impact on livestock grazing. This issue was considered but dropped because the BLM's wilderness management policy provides for the continued use of wilderness areas for livestock operations at historic levels. Although the management practices of livestock operators in the WSAs would be more closely regulated, they would continue as they did prior to wilderness designations subject to reasonable regulations. The few proposed range improvements are small scale and similar to existing improvements. The wilderness management policy allows these types of improvements in order to continue the existing livestock program. While this issue has been dropped from analysis, a brief description of the planned livestock program has been included because this is a significant nonconforming use which is specifically allowed by Congress. It is anticipated that the numbers of livestock permitted to graze in wilderness areas would remain at the approximate levels existing at the time an area enters the wilderness system. If land management plans reveal conclusively that increased livestock numbers or animal unit months (AUMs) could be made available

with no adverse impact on wilderness values such as plant communities, primitive recreation, and wildlife populations or habitat, some increases in AUMs may be permissible. This is not to imply, however, that wilderness lends itself to AUM or livestock increases and construction of substantial new facilities that might be appropriate for intensive grazing management in non-wilderness areas.

Impact on Water Quality

The issue of how water quality would be affected by wilderness designation or nondesignation in the Wall Canyon WSA was identified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. This issue was not selected for analysis in the EIS because the primary influence on water quality in the WSA, livestock use, would not vary sufficiently with or without wilderness designation to affect water quality in the WSA. Other existing or potential activities, such as mineral development, are absent or affect such a small area that their influence on water quality would be negligible.

Impact on Threatened or Endangered Species

Wildlife and vegetation inventories and consultation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service did not identify any threatened or endangered species in the Wall Canyon WSA. There were concerns raised during the DEIS comment period regarding the Wall Canyon sucker. This fish has been designated as a candidate species by the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) due to a non-confirmed reference that the fish represents an undescribed species. Recent inventories have shown that the fish is abundant in Wall Canyon and that the current habitat conditions are not limiting fish populations. There are no known activities planned which would affect the habitat of the Wall Canyon Sucker. Wilderness designation or nondesignation would not change the amount or condition of the available habitat. Therefore, this issue was not considered for detailed analysis and dropped from further consideration.

Impacts on Wildlife

An issue dealing with wildlife in general was considered but not included in this EIS because no specific impacts on populations or the habitat of any specific species were identified, based on the projections of development in the WSA. Little or no change in wildlife populations or habitat is anticipated with wilderness designation or nondesignation.

Impacts on Private Inholdings

The impact of wilderness designation or nondesignation on private land inholdings was dropped from further consideration because the uses on these lands is not anticipated to change as a result of designation or nondesignation. Additionally, the BLM's wilderness management policy assures adequate access to serve the reasonable purposes for which the private land is held or used while causing the least lasting impact on the wilderness resource. Therefore, impacts on private inholding was not considered for further analysis.

Impacts on Cultural Resource Management

Cultural resource inventories and consultation with the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office identified several districts of potential National Register quality. The archeological sites that do exist in the area would be protected with or without wilderness designation. Since the management of cultural resources would not vary significantly, with or without wilderness designation, the issue of impacts on cultural resources was dropped from further analysis.

LITTLE HIGH ROCK CANYON WSA
(CA-020-913/NV-020-008)

Impact on Water Quality

The issue of how water quality would be affected by wilderness designation or nondesignation in the Little High Rock Canyon WSA was identified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. This issue was not selected for analysis in the EIS because the primary influence on water quality in the WSA, livestock use, would not vary sufficiently with or without wilderness designation to affect water quality in the WSA. Other existing or potential activities, such as mineral development, are absent or affect such a small area that their influence on water quality would be negligible.

Impact on the Reintroduction of Bighorn Sheep

The reintroduction of Bighorn Sheep, if it occurs, would be independent of the designation of the Little High Rock Canyon WSA as wilderness since the wilderness management policy provides guidelines for reintroduction of native wildlife species including the development of water sources. This issue was not selected for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Threatened or Endangered Species

Wildlife and vegetation inventories and consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service did not identify any threatened or endangered species in the Little High Rock Canyon WSA. Therefore, this issue was dropped from further consideration.

Impacts on Wildlife

An issue dealing with wildlife in general was considered but not included in this EIS because no specific impacts on populations or the habitat of any specific species were identified, based on the projections of development in the WSA. Little or no change in wildlife populations or habitat is anticipated with wilderness designation or nondesignation.

Impacts on Geothermal Development

Geothermal resources within the Little High Rock Canyon WSA have been identified as "prospectively valuable." While there is a low potential for low intensive geothermal development, there has been no interest

expressed concerning applications, lease, or exploration. Therefore, the issue of impacts on geothermal development was dropped from further analysis.

Impacts on Cultural Resource Management

Cultural resource inventories and consultation with the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office identified areas of high archaeological values including a district of potential National Register quality. Little High Rock Canyon is exceptionally rich in cultural sites, including the historic High Rock Massacre site. It has been proposed as a National Register District. The remainder of the WSA is characterized by large quarry sites and lithic scatters. The archeological sites that do exist in the area would be protected with or without wilderness designation. Since the management of cultural resources would not vary significantly, with or without wilderness designation, the issue of impacts on cultural resources was dropped from further analysis.

Impacts on Predator Control

The issue of how predator control activities for domestic sheep grazing would be affected by wilderness designation was identified by the ranching community. Existing policy recognizes predator control may be required on federal lands, both wilderness and non-wilderness, to prevent excessive losses to livestock. Acceptable control methods are to be directed at eliminating the offending individual animals by trapping and aerial control. Poisons would not be allowed in wilderness areas. In this WSA toxicants are not being used and past activities have shown them to be ineffective during the period of control activities. Since activities for predator control could continue without significant modification, with or without wilderness designation, this issue was dropped from further consideration.

YELLOW ROCK CANYON
(CA-020-913A)

Impact on Water Quality

The issue of how water quality would be affected by wilderness designation or nondesignation in the Yellow Rock Canyon WSA was identified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. This issue was not selected for analysis in the EIS because the primary influence on water quality in the WSA, livestock use, would not vary sufficiently with or without wilderness designation to affect water quality in the WSA. Other existing or potential activities, such as mineral development, are absent or affect such a small area that their influence on water quality would be negligible.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

Development of mineral resources within designated wilderness areas could be affected by wilderness management restrictions. However, the potential

for mineral resources is considered low and few mining claims exist in the WSA. Therefore this issue was dropped from further consideration.

Impact on the Reintroduction of Bighorn Sheep

The reintroduction of Bighorn Sheep, if it occurs, would be independent of the designation of the Yellow Rock Canyon WSA as wilderness since the wilderness management policy provides guidelines for reintroduction of native wildlife species. This issue was not selected for analysis in the EIS.

Impact on Threatened or Endangered Species

Wildlife and vegetation inventories and consultation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service did not identify any threatened or endangered species in the Yellow Rock Canyon WSA. Therefore this issue was dropped from further consideration.

Impacts on Wildlife

An issue dealing with wildlife in general was considered but not included in this EIS because no specific impacts on populations or the habitat of any specific species were identified, based on the projections of development in the WSA. Little or no change in wildlife populations or habitat is anticipated with wilderness designation or nondesignation.

Impacts on Cultural Resources

Cultural resource inventories and consultation with the California and Nevada State Historic Preservation Offices identified areas of high archeological values including seventeen sites of potential National Register quality. The archeological sites that do exist in the area would be protected with or without wilderness designation. Since the management of cultural resources would not vary significantly, with or without wilderness designation, the issue of impacts on cultural resources was dropped from further analysis.

Impacts on Livestock Grazing and Range Management

Concerns were raised that livestock operators could be required to modify their operations within designated wilderness in a manner that would have significant adverse impact on livestock grazing. This issue was considered but dropped because the BLM's wilderness management policy provides for the continued use of wilderness areas for livestock operations at historic levels. Although the management practices of livestock operators in the WSAs would be more closely regulated, they would continue as they did prior to wilderness designations subject to reasonable regulations. The few proposed range improvements are small scale and similar to existing improvements. The wilderness management policy allows these types of improvements in order to continue the existing livestock program. While this issue has been dropped from analysis, a brief description of the planned livestock program has been included because this is a significant nonconforming use which is

specifically allowed by Congress. It is anticipated that the numbers of livestock permitted to graze in wilderness areas would remain at the approximate levels existing at the time an area enters the wilderness system. If land management plans reveal conclusively that increased livestock numbers or animal unit months (AUMs) could be made available with no adverse impact on wilderness values such as plant communities, primitive recreation, and wildlife populations or habitat, some increases in AUMs may be permissible. This is not to imply, however, that wilderness lends itself to AUM or livestock increases and construction of substantial new facilities that might be appropriate for intensive grazing management in non-wilderness areas.

Impacts on Predator Control

The issue of how predator control activities for domestic sheep grazing would be affected by wilderness designation was identified by the ranching community. Existing policy recognizes predator control may be required on federal lands, both wilderness and non-wilderness, to prevent excessive losses to livestock. Acceptable control methods are to be directed at eliminating the offending individual animals by trapping and aerial control. Poisons would not be allowed in wilderness areas. In this WSA toxicants are not being used and past activities have shown them to be ineffective during the period of control activities. Since activities for predator control could continue without significant modification, with or without wilderness designation, this issue was dropped from further consideration.

HIGH ROCK CANYON WSA
(CA-020-913B)

Impact on Water Quality

The issue of how water quality would be affected by wilderness designation or nondesignation in the High Rock Canyon WSA was identified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. This issue was not selected for analysis in the EIS because the primary influence on water quality in the WSA, livestock use, would not vary sufficiently with or without wilderness designation to affect water quality in the WSA. Other existing or potential activities, such as mineral development, are absent or affect such a small area that their influence on water quality would be negligible.

Impact on Threatened or Endangered Species

Wildlife and vegetation inventories and consultation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service did not identify any threatened or endangered species in the High Rock Canyon WSA. Therefore this issue was dropped from further consideration.

Impacts on Wildlife

An issue dealing with wildlife in general was considered but not included in this EIS because no specific impacts on populations or the habitat of

any specific species were identified, based on the projections of development in the WSA. Little or no change in wildlife populations or habitat is anticipated with wilderness designation or nondesignation.

Impact on the Reintroduction of Bighorn Sheep

The reintroduction of Bighorn Sheep, if it occurs, would be independent of the designation of the High Rock Canyon WSA as wilderness since the Wilderness Management Policy provides guidelines for reintroduction of native wildlife species. This issue was not selected for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Split Estate Lands

Wilderness designation could affect mineral resource development of private subsurface mineral ownership where the surface is public lands. The Cowhead/Massacre Land Use Plan mandates the acquisition of private mineral values through a mineral exchange. There is no known mineral potential associated with these lands, therefore, this issue is not considered for analysis and is dropped from further consideration in the EIS.

Impacts on Cultural Resource Management

Cultural resource inventories and consultation with the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office have identified portions of the High Rock Canyon WSA as having rich cultural values. The Lassen-Applegate Trail up High Rock Canyon is on the National Register of Historic Places. The cultural sites that exist in the WSA would be protected with or without wilderness designation. Since the management of cultural resources would not vary significantly, the issue of impacts on cultural resources was dropped from further analysis.

Wild Horse and Burro Herd Management

Wild horse and burro herd management could be affected by wilderness designation. However, the BLM's Wilderness Management Policies provide guidelines that would be effective in the High Rock Canyon WSA. The current trap site is located on the WSA boundary and has established access. The use of portable corrals, helicopters for herding, and trucks for carrying materials and animals is considered to be an effective and minimum method necessary for gathering wild horses and burros to maintain herd size as outlined in High Rock HAMP. Since these methods are considered permissible in the BLM's Wilderness Management Policy, impacts on wild horse and burro herd management is not an issue considered for further analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Livestock Grazing and Range Management

Concerns were raised that livestock operators could be required to modify their operations within designated wilderness in a manner that would have significant adverse impact on livestock grazing. This issue was considered but dropped because the BLM's wilderness management policy

provides for the continued use of wilderness areas for livestock operations at historic levels. Although the management practices of livestock operators in the WSAs would be more closely regulated, they would continue as they did prior to wilderness designations subject to reasonable regulations. The few proposed range improvements are small scale and similar to existing improvements. The wilderness management policy allows these types of improvements in order to continue the existing livestock program. While this issue has been dropped from analysis, a brief description of the planned livestock program has been included because this is a significant nonconforming use which is specifically allowed by Congress. It is anticipated that the numbers of livestock permitted to graze in wilderness areas would remain at the approximate levels existing at the time an area enters the wilderness system. If land management plans reveal conclusively that increased livestock numbers or animal unit months (AUMs) could be made available with no adverse impact on wilderness values such as plant communities, primitive recreation, and wildlife populations or habitat, some increases in AUMs may be permissible. This is not to imply, however, that wilderness lends itself to AUM or livestock increases and construction of substantial new facilities that might be appropriate for intensive grazing management in non-wilderness areas.

Impacts on Predator Control

The issue of how predator control activities for domestic sheep grazing would be affected by wilderness designation was identified by the ranching community. Existing policy recognizes predator control may be required on federal lands, both wilderness and non-wilderness, to prevent excessive losses to livestock. Acceptable control methods are to be directed at eliminating the offending individual animals by trapping and aerial control. Poisons would not be allowed in wilderness areas. In this WSA toxicants are not being used and past activities have shown them to be ineffective during the period of control activities. Since activities for predator control could continue without significant modification, with or without wilderness designation, this issue was dropped from further consideration.

EAST FORK HIGH ROCK CANYON WSA
(CA-020-914/NV-020-006A)

Impact on Water Quality

The issue of how water quality would be affected by wilderness designation or nondesignation in the East Fork Rock Canyon WSA was identified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. This issue was not selected for analysis in the EIS because the primary influence on water quality in the WSA, livestock use, would not vary sufficiently with or without wilderness designation to affect water quality in the WSA. Other existing or potential activities, such as mineral development, are absent or affect such a small area that their influence on water quality would be negligible.

Impact on Threatened or Endangered Species

Wildlife and vegetation inventories and consultation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service did not identify any threatened or endangered species in the East Fork High Rock Canyon WSA. Therefore this issue was dropped from further consideration.

Impacts on Private Inholdings

The impact of wilderness designation or nondesignation on private land inholdings was dropped from further consideration because the uses on these lands is not anticipated to change as a result of designation or nondesignation. Additionally, the BLM's wilderness management policy assures adequate access to serve the reasonable purposes for which the private land is held or used while causing the least lasting impact on the wilderness resource. Therefore, impacts on private inholding was not considered for further analysis.

Impact on the Reintroduction of Bighorn Sheep

The reintroduction of Bighorn Sheep, if it occurs, would be independent of the designation of the East Fork High Rock Canyon WSA as wilderness since the Wilderness Management Policy provides guidelines for reintroduction of native wildlife species. This issue was not selected for analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Split Estate Lands

Wilderness designation could affect mineral resource development of private subsurface mineral ownership where the surface is public lands. The Cowhead/Massacre Land Use Plan mandates the acquisition of private mineral values through a mineral exchange. There is no known mineral potential associated with these lands, therefore, this issue is not considered for analysis and is dropped from further consideration in the EIS.

Impacts on Wildlife

An issue dealing with wildlife in general was considered but not included in this EIS because no specific impacts on populations or the habitat of any specific species were identified, based on the projections of development in the WSA. Little or no change in wildlife populations or habitat is anticipated with wilderness designation or nondesignation.

Impacts on Cultural Resource Management

Cultural resource inventories and consultation with the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office have identified portions of the East Fork High Rock Canyon WSA as having rich cultural values. The Lassen-Applegate Trail up High Rock Canyon is on the National Register of Historic Places. The cultural sites that exist in the WSA would be protected with or without wilderness designation. Since the management of cultural resources would not vary significantly, the issue of impacts on cultural resources was dropped from further analysis.

Impact on Water Quality

The issue of how water quality would be affected by wilderness designation or non-designation in the Sheldon Contiguous WSA was identified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. This issue was not selected for analysis in the EIS because the primary influence on water quality in the WSA, livestock use, would not vary sufficiently with or without wilderness designation to affect water quality in the WSA. Other existing or potential activities, such as mineral development, are absent or affect such a small area that their influence on water quality would be negligible.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

Development of mineral resources within designated wilderness areas could be affected by wilderness management restrictions. However, the potential for mineral resources is considered low and few mining claims exist in the WSA. Therefore this issue was dropped from further consideration.

Impacts on Threatened or Endangered Species

Wildlife and vegetation inventories and consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service did not identify any threatened or endangered species in the Sheldon Contiguous WSA. Therefore, this issue was dropped from further consideration.

Impacts on Wildlife

An issue dealing with wildlife in general was considered but not included in this EIS because no specific impacts on populations or the habitat of any specific species were identified, based on the projections of development in the WSA. Little or no change in wildlife populations or habitat is anticipated with wilderness designation or nondesignation.

Impacts on Livestock Grazing and Range Management

Concerns were raised that livestock operators could be required to modify their operations within designated wilderness in a manner that would have significant adverse impact on livestock grazing. This issue was considered but dropped because the BLM's wilderness management policy provides for the continued use of wilderness areas for livestock operations at historic levels. Although the management practices of livestock operators in the WSAs would be more closely regulated, they would continue as they did prior to wilderness designations subject to reasonable regulations. The few proposed range improvements are small scale and similar to existing improvements. The wilderness management policy allows these types of improvements in order to continue the existing livestock program. While this issue has been dropped from

analysis, a brief description of the planned livestock program has been included because this is a significant nonconforming use which is specifically allowed by Congress. It is anticipated that the numbers of livestock permitted to graze in wilderness areas would remain at the approximate levels existing at the time an area enters the wilderness system. If land management plans reveal conclusively that increased livestock numbers or animal unit months (AUMs) could be made available with no adverse impact on wilderness values such as plant communities, primitive recreation, and wildlife populations or habitat, some increases in AUMs may be permissible. This is not to imply, however, that wilderness lends itself to AUM or livestock increases and construction of substantial new facilities that might be appropriate for intensive grazing management in non-wilderness areas.

MASSACRE RIM WSA
(CA-020-1013)

Impact on Water Quality

The issue of how water quality would be affected by wilderness designation or nondesignation in the Massacre Rim WSA was identified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. This issue was not selected for analysis in the EIS because the primary influence on water quality in the WSA, livestock use, would not vary sufficiently with or without wilderness designation to affect water quality in the WSA. Other existing or potential activities, such as mineral development, are absent or affect such a small area that their influence on water quality would be negligible.

Impacts on Threatened and Endangered Species

Wildlife and vegetation inventories and consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service did not identify any threatened or endangered species in the Massacre Rim WSA. Therefore, this issue was dropped from further consideration.

Impacts on Wildlife

An issue dealing with wildlife in general was considered but not included in this EIS because no specific impacts on populations or the habitat of any specific species were identified, based on the projections of development in the WSA. Little or no change in wildlife populations or habitat is anticipated with wilderness designation or nondesignation.

Impact on the Reintroduction of Bighorn Sheep

The reintroduction of Bighorn Sheep, if it occurs, would be independent of the designation of the Massacre Rim WSA as wilderness since the Wilderness Management Policy provides guidelines for reintroduction of native wildlife species. This issue was not selected for analysis in the EIS.

Wild Horse and Burro Herd Management

Wild horse and burro herd management could be affected by wilderness designation. However, the BLM's Wilderness Management Policies provide guidelines that would be effective in the Massacre Rim WSA. The current trap site is located within one-quarter mile of the WSA boundary and has established access. The use of portable corrals, helicopters for herding, and trucks for carrying materials and animals is considered to be an effective and minimum method necessary for gathering wild horses and burros to maintain herd size as outlined in Massacre Lakes HAMP. Since these methods are considered permissible in the BLM's Wilderness Management Policy, impacts on wild horse and burro herd management is not an issue considered for further analysis in the EIS.

Impacts on Predator Control

The issue of how predator control activities for domestic sheep grazing would be affected by wilderness designation was identified by the ranching community. Existing policy recognizes predator control may be required on federal lands, both wilderness and non-wilderness, to prevent excessive losses to livestock. Acceptable control methods are to be directed at eliminating the offending individual animals by trapping and aerial control. Poisons would not be allowed in wilderness areas. In this WSA toxicants are not being used and past activities have shown them to be ineffective during the period of control activities. Since activities for predator control could continue without significant modification, with or without wilderness designation, this issue was dropped from further consideration.

TECHNICAL REVIEW TEAM PROCESS

This process was used to develop the Proposed Action in this EIS.

The Susanville District Advisory Council (DAC) after reviewing the BLM Wilderness Study/EIS Process, recommended to the District Manager and California State Director that the Technical Review Team Process be used to assist the BLM in preparing the Draft Wilderness EIS.

The Technical Review Team (TRT) process was developed by the Modoc/Washoe Experimental Stewardship Committee. It was used as a tool to lessen the chances of polarization of interest groups and provide the Bureau with better quality public input for decision making purposes. It worked very well on developing grazing decisions for some very environmentally sensitive areas in the Surprise Resource Area.

The Process starts with the formation of a team of field-level technicians representing all concerned parties affected by the decision. The individual team members must be people who are very knowledgeable about the resource they represent, they must be able to work well with people of different philosophies and they must have a certain degree of credibility among the constituency they were chosen to represent. The Stewardship committee requested that all recommendations from the teams must be agreed upon by consensus. This meant that no recommendations would be forwarded without unanimous agreement from all team members.

To represent the many resource interests concerned with Wilderness decisions and still keep the team size manageable, the DAC recommended that two teams be formed, one for the Surprise Resource Area and one for the Eagle Lake Resource Area. The council selected eight member teams, representing the following resources and interests:

- Livestock-Adjacent Landowners
- Wildlife-Agencies-Sportsmen
- Wilderness-Environmental-Dispersed Recreation
- Minerals-Energy-Utilities
- Wild Horses
- Motorized Recreation
- Cultural-Historical-Archaeological
- Bureau of Land Management

Team member selection was accomplished by first soliciting nominations from user groups, agencies, and key individuals. The DAC was surprised and gratified by the response they received. After reviewing the nominations and selecting primary and alternate team members, one of the DAC members remarked that "it would have cost the BLM a small fortune to go out and hire consultants with the quality of expertise that was represented on the teams." A list of team members is included in the appendix.

The teams were provided with a rough draft EIS containing five alternatives and all the information the BLM had on existing and potential uses of the lands in question. They had attended an orientation/team building session to meet each other and learn the requirements of a BLM Wilderness Study/EIS.

The Eagle Lake Team held a public meeting in Susanville to allow the general public to meet with them and discuss their concerns. Both teams also provided opportunities for the public to meet with them during the field trips.

Each team went on a three day field trip where they stayed together at a BLM field camp. They were taken by helicopter to several locations in each WSA where they discussed wilderness values and potential resource conflicts on site. This is an essential step in the process.

The recommendation that was developed by each team represents their best effort at prioritizing wilderness qualities and the significance of resource conflicts or manageability problems. They used this information to identify those areas which appear to be suitable for wilderness designation and other areas which appear to be non-suitable. The teams mentioned several times that their deliberations were probably a good barometer of public feelings and concerns.

Reaching agreement on wilderness suitability was no easy process for the teams. The level of frustration was often very high. Tempers sometimes flared. At times the task seemed hopeless. But they persisted. The teams each spent four or five full days in discussions, often late into the evening. When it was all over, consensus had been reached on twelve of the thirteen WSAs.

The Surprise TRT recommendation was reviewed by the Modoc/Washoe Experimental Stewardship Committee. It was approved and forwarded to the District Advisory Council. The DAC reviewed and approved both the Eagle Lake and Surprise TRT recommendations and passed them on to the BLM with the recommendation that the BLM decide on the Wall Canyon WSA (the one unit where consensus was not reached). The BLM recommended non-wilderness designation for the entire WSA. The DAC also recommended that BLM adopt the TRT proposed actions for the draft EIS. Upon review of the public comment received, the DAC reaffirmed their recommendation of the proposed actions.

SELECTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF ALTERNATIVES

Through the scoping process and Technical Review Team process, the following proposed actions and alternatives were selected for analysis:

TUNNISON MOUNTAIN (CA-020-311) 20,650 Acres

Proposed Action/Partial Wilderness: 7,660 suitable/12,990 non-suitable

The proposed action is to designate 7,660 acres wilderness. The suitable area consists of Tunnison Mountain and 2¼ miles of Willow Creek Canyon. Features that distinguish the suitable area are a diverse range of vegetation including riparian zones along Willow Creek, pine and juniper woodlands, stringer hillside meadows, sage/grass communities and mountain mahogany. Willow Creek also contains a trout fishery. The portions of the WSA not designated as wilderness include the northern part of the WSA above Long Canyon cherrystem road, which almost bisects the WSA. This northern portion does not have the diversity and special values found in the suitable portion. It also contained more private inholdings and lacked good definable boundaries. The northern non-suitable portion included areas that contain conflicts with recreational hunting that made use of existing ways for access to the area.

All Wilderness: 20,650 suitable/0 non-suitable

The entire Tunnison Mountain WSA would be designated wilderness.

Partial Wilderness: 15,090 suitable/5,560 non-suitable

Two adjacent but separate wilderness areas would be designated north and south of the Long Canyon road. North of Long Canyon 7,100 acres would be designated wilderness. This is the majority of the WSA north of Long Canyon except for small areas of open slopes adjacent to boundary roads. South of Long Canyon, 7,990 acres would be designated wilderness. This area consists of Tunnison Mountain and 2¼ miles of Willow Creek Canyon. This alternative corresponds with Alternative II in the draft EIS.

No Wilderness/No Action: 0 acres suitable/20,650 acres non-suitable

None of the 20,650 acre Tunnison Mountain Wilderness Study Area would be designated wilderness. The area would be managed for multiple use as described in part in this document and in the BLM's Willow Creek planning unit's Land Use Plan.

FIVE SPRINGS (CA-020-609) 48,460 Acres

Proposed Action/No Wilderness/No Action: 0 suitable/48,460 non-suitable

The proposed action for the Five Springs WSA is to not designate any of the WSA wilderness. The area will be managed under BLM's Cal Neva Planning Units existing Land Use Plan that emphasizes livestock, wildlife and recreational use of the area with provisions for protection of archaeological resources. The WSA does not provide unique special ecologic, geologic or other features of special scientific, educational or scenic value which would receive substantial benefits from wilderness designation.

Alternatives to the proposed action selected for analysis.

All Wilderness: 48,460 suitable/0 non-suitable

The entire 48,460 acre WSA would be designated wilderness. This alternative represents the maximum possible acreage that could be designated wilderness.

Partial Wilderness: 25,174 suitable/23,286 non-suitable

This partial wilderness alternative recommends wilderness designation for 25,174 acres of the WSA. This recommendation includes the higher elevation portions of Rush Creek, Cherry and Five Springs Mountains. The lower slopes of these mountains accessible by off road vehicles are not included in the suitable area. No private inholdings are included in this alternative. This alternative corresponds with Alternative III in the draft EIS.

SKEDADDLE (CA-020-612) 63,790 Acres

Proposed Action/Partial Wilderness: 37,240 suitable/26,550 non-suitable

The proposed action designates 37,240 acres of the Skedaddle Mountain WSA wilderness. The suitable area contains the core of mountainous area within the WSA encompassing the Skedaddle Mountains, the Wendel Cliffs, portions of the Amedee Mountains north of the Amedee ridge crest, and Big and Little Spencer Basins.

The suitable area offers outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation. Many peaks, ridges and canyons afford excellent opportunities for exploration and challenging primitive recreation activities in a natural appearing, and in many areas a very scenic, environment.

Special features that add interest to the suitable area are volcanic cliffs, spires and rims of Wendel Cliffs, Wendel, James and Amedee Canyons. Big and Little Spencer Basins, Skedaddle Creek drainages, Hot Springs Peak and the Amedee Ridge Crest offer outstanding opportunities for solitude and scenic vistas. In addition, there are numerous riparian areas located in canyon bottoms and around many springs and aspen groves on the north slope of the Skedaddles. Large populations of nesting

raptors, including golden eagles, prairie falcons, great horned owls, long eared owls, and red tailed hawks afford good opportunities for viewing birds of prey. High archaeological values are found along the suitable area's south and west slopes.

The portions of the WSA not designated as wilderness include lower slopes of open terrain accessible to and used by off road vehicles in support of hunting access, areas within a 1 mile zone around the Sierra Army Depot's Military Withdrawal area on the southern side of the WSA that corresponds to a Lassen County Public Safety Zone around the Sierra Army Depot's demolition area, and lower slopes of the WSA within the Wendel Known Geothermal Resource Area. Portions of these areas were also designated non-suitable to allow for a high priority potential utility corridor alignment along the WSA's northern boundary to provide 300' set backs adjacent to boundary roads and a 100' set back adjacent to cherrystem roads within Skedaddle Creek drainage for motorized vehicle pull offs, vehicle camping and to allow for road and way maintenance.

All Wilderness: 63,790 suitable/0 non-suitable

All 63,790 acres of the Skedaddle WSA would be designated wilderness. This represents the maximum possible acreage that could be designated wilderness.

Partial Wilderness: 24,510 suitable/39,280 non-suitable

The partial wilderness alternative for Skedaddle Mountain WSA would designate 24,510 acres wilderness. The designated area includes the rugged peaks, ridges and canyons of the Skedaddle and Amedee Mountains, as well as Wendel Cliffs and Big and Little Spencer Basins. Areas not designated wilderness in this alternative are the Amedee Mountains' southern slopes, lands within the Skedaddle Creek drainage, lands on the lower elevation northern slopes of the WSA and lower elevation terrain on the east and west sides of the WSA that is accessible by ORVs. This alternative corresponds to Alternative III in the draft EIS.

No Wilderness/No Action: 0 suitable/63,790 non-suitable

None of the 63,790 acres of the Skedaddle Mountain WSA would be designated wilderness.

DRY VALLEY RIM (CA-020-615) 95,025 Acres

Proposed Action/Partial Wilderness: 52,845 suitable/42,180 non-suitable

The proposed action designates 52,845 acres of the Dry Valley Rim WSA wilderness. The suitable area is approximately 5 miles wide by 15 miles long, containing Dry Valley Rim and its broad, gradually sloping western flank. This alternative corresponds to Alternative VI in the draft EIS.

Special features within the suitable area are centered around Dry Valley Rim. The rim provides scenic interest, dramatic vertical relief and affords excellent vistas from atop its 1000 to 1500 foot escarpment.

Wildlife is also of particular interest in the suitable area with good opportunities for viewing deer, antelope and golden eagles. Opportunities for viewing wild horses are also good.

The portions of the WSA not designated as wilderness includes the southern four miles of the WSA and lower slopes along the WSA's western and eastern boundaries. These areas are not designated wilderness because of open terrain easily accessed by off road vehicles for hunter access. The southern end of the WSA is also not designated wilderness because of the influence of smoke and dust clouds passing over the area from detonations at the Sierra Army Depot's demolition facility two miles west of the WSA. A portion of the unsuitable area on the eastern boundary is within a high priority potential utility corridor alignment.

All Wilderness: 95,025 suitable/0 non-suitable

All 95,025 acres of the Dry Valley Rim WSA would be designated wilderness. This represents the maximum possible acreage that could be designated wilderness.

Partial Wilderness: 36,545 suitable/58,480 non-suitable

The partial wilderness alternative for Dry Valley Rim WSA would designate 35,545 acres wilderness. The designated area consists of the sharp eastern face of Dry Valley Rim and the higher elevation terrain that slopes gradually westward from Dry Valley Rim's crest. Areas not designated wilderness in this alternative are the southern four miles of the WSA, lower slopes below Dry Valley Rim's steep eastern escarpment and portions of the northwestern end of the WSA. This alternative corresponds with Alternative III in the draft EIS.

No Wilderness/No Action: 0 suitable/95,025 non-suitable

None of the 95,025 acre Dry Valley Rim Wilderness Study Area would be designated wilderness. The area would be managed for multiple use as described in part in this document and in the BLM's Cal Neva Planning Unit's Land Use Plan.

BUFFALO HILLS (CA-020-619) 47,315 Acres

Proposed Action/No Wilderness/No Action: 0 suitable/47,315 non-suitable

The proposed action for the Buffalo Hills WSA is to not designate any of the 47,315 acres as wilderness. The area will be managed under BLM's Cal Neva Planning Unit's existing Land Use Plan that emphasizes livestock, wildlife and recreational use of the area.

The WSA contains no geological, ecological, educational, scenic or historical features significant enough to recommend their protection by wilderness designation. There are no significant multiple resource values, such as watershed, wildlife habitat or archaeological sites that would depend on wilderness preservation for protection.

All Wilderness: 47,315 suitable/0 non-suitable

The entire 47,315 acre WSA would be designated wilderness. This alternative represents the maximum possible acreage that could be designated wilderness.

Partial Wilderness: 23,230 suitable/24,085 non-suitable

This partial wilderness alternative recommends wilderness designation for 23,230 acres of the WSA. This recommendation encompasses approximately the eastern half of the WSA. The area consists of open terrain, broken by small rims and hills ending at the steep east and south slopes of Buffalo Creek's north and south forks.

TWIN PEAKS (CA-020-619A) 91,405 Acres

Proposed Action/Partial Wilderness: 54,970 suitable/36,435 non-suitable

The proposed action designates 54,970 acres of the Twin Peaks WSA wilderness. This area constitutes the majority of the WSA and extends from Buffalo Creek Canyon on the east to Smoke Creek on the west and from Al Shinn Canyon and the south fork of Parsnip Canyon on the north to the township line separating Township 31 and 32 North on the south. This area is characterized by eroded volcanic peaks, ridges and canyons with numerous ephemeral drainages.

Physical relief is the primary special feature within the suitable area. The numerous mountains, canyons, rims and ridges form a rugged area largely unaffected by the imprint of man. Of particular interest are Willow Creek Canyon, Buffalo Creek Canyon, Chimney Creek Canyon and Smoke Creek Canyon. Opportunities for primitive type recreation and exploration are good throughout this area. Archaeological sites with National Register quality are found in the southwestern area along Smoke Creek. Occurrence of additional sites is expected to be high throughout the area based on surveys and physical features. The riparian portions of Smoke Creek and Buffalo Creek also add special scenic, ecological and wildlife interest to the area. Opportunities for viewing wildlife are good with deer, antelope, chukar and golden eagles prevalent. Opportunities for viewing wild horses and burros are also good.

The portions of the WSA not designated as wilderness are peripheral more gradual terrain on the east and west that is accessible to motorized off road vehicles and is used for motorized hunter access. On the south the non-suitable area coincides with an area identified as a high priority alignment for a potential utility corridor.

All Wilderness: 91,405 suitable/0 non-suitable

All 91,405 acres of the Twin Peaks WSA would be designated wilderness. This represents the maximum possible acreage that could be designated wilderness.

No Wilderness/No Action: 0 suitable/91,405 non-suitable

None of the 91,405 acres of the Twin Peaks WSA would be designated wilderness.

WALL CANYON (CA-020-805) 45,790 Acres

Proposed Action/No Wilderness/No Action: 0 suitable/45,790 non-suitable

The proposed action for the Wall Canyon WSA is to not designate any of the 45,790 acres as wilderness. The WSA does not provide unique special ecologic, geologic or other features of special scientific, educational or scenic value which would receive substantial benefits from wilderness designation.

All Wilderness: 45,790 suitable/0 non-suitable

All 45,790 acres in the WSA would be designated as wilderness. This alternative represents the maximum possible acreage that could be designated wilderness.

Partial Wilderness: 26,520 suitable/19,270 non-suitable

The partial wilderness alternative would designate 26,520 acres of the WSA as wilderness. This alternative includes as wilderness the east and south slopes of Boulder Mountain, Wall Canyon, Badger Creek Canyon and the rolling terrain north of Wall Canyon Reservoir. This alternative corresponds to Alternative III in the draft EIS.

LITTLE HIGH ROCK CANYON (CA-020-913 AND NV-020-008) 52,143 Acres

Proposed Action/Partial Wilderness: 17,320 suitable/34,823 non-suitable

The proposed action for the Little High Rock Canyon WSA is to manage 17,320 acres as wilderness. The suitable portion includes Little High Rock Canyon, McConnell Canyon and the upland buttes and plateaus between the two canyons. The proposed action was selected to provide wilderness management to a portion of the High Rock complex, a high value area which includes portions of four WSAs. The portion designated as wilderness is an area with outstanding naturalness and outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, as well as a wealth of supplemental values which complement the wilderness values. The topographic relief in the canyons contrasts with the open uplands to create superb scenic quality. The cultural resource values for both archaeological and historic interest are of significance on a national level. The wildlife resource for antelope, golden eagles, prairie falcons and the potential for a large population of bighorn sheep is unique to the region. The portions of the WSA not designated as wilderness include areas identified in the planning process that contain conflicts with mineral resources, range management projects, as well as areas with recreational off road vehicle problems.

All Wilderness: 52,143 suitable/0 non-suitable

All 52,143 acres in the WSA would be designated wilderness. This alternative represents the maximum possible acreage that could be designated wilderness.

Partial Wilderness Alternative: 45,643 suitable/6,500 non-suitable

The partial wilderness alternative would designate 45,643 acres of the WSA as wilderness. This includes all of the WSA except two small areas, one along the southern boundary and the other along the northwestern boundary. This alternative corresponds to Alternative II in the draft EIS.

No Wilderness/No Action: 0 suitable/52,143 non-suitable

None of the 52,143 acres in the WSA would be designated as wilderness.

YELLOW ROCK CANYON (CA-020-913A) 13,050 Acres

Proposed Action/No Wilderness/No Action: 0 suitable/13,050 non-suitable

The proposed action for the Yellow Rock Canyon WSA is to not designate any of the 13,050 acres as wilderness. The WSA does not provide special ecologic, geologic or other features of special scientific, educational or scenic value which would receive substantial benefits from wilderness designation.

All Wilderness: 13,050 suitable/0 non-suitable

All 13,050 acres in the WSA would be designated as wilderness. This alternative represents the maximum possible acreage that could be designated wilderness.

Partial Wilderness: 6,390 suitable/6,660 non-suitable

The partial wilderness alternative would designate 6,390 acres of the WSA as wilderness. The designated area includes Yellow Rock Canyon and the ridgeline south of Yellow Rock Canyon. This alternative corresponds to Alternative III in the draft EIS.

HIGH ROCK CANYON (CA-020-913B) 33,985 Acres

Proposed Action/Partial Wilderness: 12,180 suitable/21,805 non-suitable

The proposed action for the High Rock Canyon WSA is to manage 12,180 acres as wilderness. The suitable portion is a twelve mile long band that lies to the west of High Rock Canyon, including lower Grassy Canyon, lower Yellow Rock Canyon and Mahogany Canyon. The proposed action was selected to provide wilderness management to a portion of the High Rock complex, a high value area which includes portions of four WSAs. The portion designated as wilderness includes an area with outstanding naturalness and outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, as well as a wealth of supplemental values which complement the wilderness values. The topographic values in the canyons contrasts with the open

uplands to create an area of superb scenic quality. The cultural resource values for both archaeological and historic interests are of significance on a national level. The wildlife resource for antelope, golden eagles, prairie falcons and the potential for a large population of bighorn sheep is unique to the region. The portions of the WSA not designated as wilderness include areas identified in the planning process that contain conflicts with mineral resources, watershed control projects, as well as areas with recreational off road vehicle problems.

All Wilderness: 33,985 suitable/0 non-suitable

All 33,985 acres of the WSA would be designated as wilderness. This alternative represents the maximum possible acreage that could be designated as wilderness.

No Wilderness/No Action: 0 suitable/33,985 non-suitable

None of the 33,985 acres in the WSA would be designated as wilderness.

EAST FORK HIGH ROCK CANYON (CA-020-914 AND NV-020-006A) 55,320 Acres

Proposed Action/Partial Wilderness: 33,460 suitable/21,860 non-suitable

The proposed action for the East Fork High Rock Canyon WSA is to manage 33,460 acres as wilderness. The suitable portion is the southern two-thirds of the WSA. The proposed action was selected to provide wilderness management to a portion of the High Rock complex, a high resource value area which includes portions of four WSAs. The portion designated as wilderness is an area with outstanding naturalness and outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, as well as a wealth of supplemental values which would complement the wilderness values. The topographic relief in High Rock and Pole Canyon contrasts with the uplands to the east of the canyons to create excellent quality scenic views. The cultural resources, both archaeological and historic, are of significance on a national level. The wildlife resources for antelope, golden eagles, prairie falcons and the potential for a large population of bighorn sheep are unique to the region. The portion of the WSA not designated as wilderness include areas identified in the planning process that contain conflicts with mineral resources, watershed control projects, wild horse management, wildlife management projects, as well as areas with recreational off road vehicle problems.

Three alternatives to the proposed action were also selected for analysis in the final EIS.

All Wilderness: 55,320 suitable/0 non-suitable

All 55,320 acres would be designated wilderness. This alternative represents the maximum possible acreage that could be designated as wilderness.

Partial Wilderness: 41,140 suitable/13,180 non-suitable

The partial wilderness alternative would designate 41,140 acres of the WSA as wilderness. The designated portion of this alternative is the central core of the WSA with nondesignated areas at the north end of the WSA (two areas) and along the eastern edge of the WSA. This alternative corresponds to Alternative II in the draft EIS.

No Wilderness/No Action: 0 suitable/55,320 non-suitable

None of the 55,320 acres in the WSA would be designated as wilderness.

SHELDON CONTIGUOUS (CA-020-1012) 24,130 Acres

Proposed Action/Partial Wilderness: 780 suitable/23,350 non-suitable

The proposed action for the Sheldon Contiguous WSA is to manage 780 acres as wilderness designation. The suitable portion includes only a small triangle in the southeastern corner of the WSA. The proposed action was selected to provide topographic continuity to an adjacent administratively endorsed WSA on the Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge. The portions of the WSA not designated were identified in the planning process as having problems with recreational off road vehicles.

All Wilderness: 24,130 suitable/0 non-suitable

All 24,130 acres of the WSA would be designated as wilderness. This alternative represents the maximum possible acreage that could be designated as wilderness.

Partial Wilderness: 12,470 suitable/11,660 non-suitable

The partial wilderness alternative would designate 12,470 acres of the WSA as wilderness. The designated portion of the WSA includes the northern half of the WSA and a one mile wide strip along the eastern boundary in the southern half of the WSA. This alternative corresponds to Alternative II in the draft EIS.

No Wilderness: 0 suitable/24,130 non-suitable

None of the 24,130 acres in the WSA would be designated as wilderness.

MASSACRE RIM (CA-020-1013) 110,000 Acres

Proposed Action/Partial Wilderness: 23,260 suitable/86,740 non-suitable

The proposed action for the Massacre Rim WSA is to manage 23,260 acres as wilderness and to manage an additional 48,730 acres of the WSA as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), designed to protect and enhance archaeological resources and the potential for a bighorn sheep reintroduction. The suitable portion of the WSA includes all of the Bitner Table north of Table Butte and east of Evans Camp. The ACEC area includes the remainder of the Massacre Bench. The proposed action was selected to provide wilderness management to a large area of open, rolling

terrain with outstanding naturalness and excellent opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation. Additional supplemental values complement the wilderness resource. The designated area includes excellent populations of mule deer, pronghorn antelope and sagegrouse which provide traditional non off road vehicle type hunting opportunities. Also, the various sub-communities of sagebrush steppe vegetative communities are in good ecological condition, which is relatively uncommon in northwestern Nevada. The portion of the WSA designated as an ACEC was selected primarily due to interest from the scientific community for large scale excavations of archaeological sites on the Massacre Bench. The remainder of the WSA that would not be designated wilderness (38,010 acres) is due to conflicts identified in the planning process, which are mineral resource development, firewood harvest, range management projects and recreational off road vehicle problems.

All Wilderness: 110,000 suitable/0 non-suitable

All 110,000 acres in the WSA would be designated as wilderness. This alternative represents the maximum possible acreage that could be designated wilderness.

Partial Wilderness Alternative A: 91,170 suitable/18,830 non-suitable

The partial wilderness alternative A would designate 91,170 acres in the WSA as wilderness. The designated portion of the WSA does not include Little Basin, the Massacre Lake seedings, the Lone Pine mining district and a small area just north of Nevada Highway 8A. This alternative corresponds to Alternative II in the draft EIS.

Partial Wilderness Alternative B: 61,240 suitable/48,760 non-suitable

The partial wilderness alternative B would designate 61,240 acres in the WSA as wilderness. The designated area includes all of the Bitner Table and all of the Massacre Bench east of Indian Spring. This alternative corresponds to Alternative III in the draft EIS.

No Wilderness/No Action: 0 suitable/110,000 non-suitable

None of the 110,000 acres in the WSA would be designated as wilderness.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT DROPPED FROM FURTHER ANALYSIS

The Draft EIS analyzed a wide range of partial wilderness alternatives that often represented very similar responses to different planning objectives. The analysis in the Draft EIS illustrated that although slight differences in acreages and boundary locations did exist, the impacts and conclusions were nearly identical. Public review and comment did not specifically support any particular partial wilderness alternative presented in the Draft EIS. As a result, the partial wilderness alternatives were reviewed to determine the most reasonable and practical alternatives for inclusion in this EIS. The various other alternatives were dropped from further consideration. These partial wilderness

alternatives as well as other alternatives raised by the public or the BLM that are not included for analysis in this EIS are discussed for each of the WSAs.

1. Five Springs WSA

In the draft EIS two partial wilderness alternatives were considered. Alternative III in the draft EIS provided an adequate analysis of the planning and environmental concerns identified through the scoping process and the review of the draft EIS, and has been retained in the final EIS. Alternative II in the draft EIS did not offer a significantly different range of choices or responses to the issues. This alternative recommended as suitable 46 acres more than the partial alternative being considered in the final EIS. It also contained private inholdings, 40 and 80 acres, not contained in the partial alternative considered in the final EIS. Due to the almost identical boundaries and acreages of the two alternatives, this partial alternative (Alternative II in the draft) has been dropped from further consideration in the EIS.

2. Skedaddle Mountain WSA

In the draft EIS four partial wilderness alternatives were considered. Alternative III and the proposed action, Alternative VI in the draft EIS provided an adequate analysis of the planning and environmental concerns identified through the scoping process and the review of the draft EIS, and have been retained in the final EIS. Alternatives II and IV in the draft EIS did no offer significantly different ranges of choices or responses to the issues. Boundaries, issues and impacts in this final EIS's proposed action (37,240 acres suitable) and partial wilderness alternative (24,510 acres suitable) are similar to those in Alternative II (32,640 acres suitable) and Alternative IV (30,930 acres suitable) analyzed in the draft EIS. Due to the similarity of impacts among these alternatives, two partial alternatives, Alternative II and IV in the draft, have been dropped from further consideration in the EIS.

3. Dry Valley Rim WSA

In the draft EIS three partial wilderness alternatives were considered. Alternative III and VI (the proposed action) in the draft EIS provided an adequate analysis of the planning and environmental concerns identified through the scoping process and the review of the draft EIS, and have been retained in the final EIS. Alternatives II in the draft EIS did not offer a significantly different range of choices or responses to the issues. Boundaries, issues and impacts in the draft's Alternative II are similar to those in Alternative III and VI. Because of the lack of significant differences between Alternative II and Alternatives III and VI, Alternative II has been dropped from further analysis in the EIS.

4. Buffalo Hills WSA

In the draft EIS two partial wilderness alternatives were considered. Alternative III in the draft EIS provided an adequate analysis of the planning and environmental concerns identified through the scoping process and the review of the draft EIS, and has been retained in the final EIS. Alternative II in the draft EIS did not offer a significantly different range of choices or responses to the issues. This alternative recommended as suitable 6,850 acres more than the partial alternative being considered in the final EIS. Due to the similar identical boundaries, acreages and impacts of the two alternatives, this partial alternative (Alternative II in the draft) has been dropped from further consideration in the EIS.

5. Twin Peaks WSA

In the draft EIS four partial wilderness alternatives were considered. Alternative VI, the proposed action in the draft EIS provided an adequate analysis of the planning and environmental concerns identified through the scoping process and the review of the draft EIS, and have been retained in the final EIS as the proposed action. Alternatives II, III and IV in the draft EIS did not offer a significantly different range of choices or responses to the issues. Boundaries, issues and impacts in this final EIS's proposed action (54,970 acres suitable) are very similar to those in the draft EIS's Alternative II (53,180 acres suitable), Alternative III (52,620 acres suitable), and Alternative IV (59,730 acres suitable). The primary difference between the draft's alternatives is the deletion of approximately four access ways from the suitable area in Alternative II and III, and the addition of approximately 4,760 acres to the suitable area in Alternative IV. Differences in impacts caused by these changes is not significant between alternatives and, therefore, Alternative II, III and IV have been dropped from further analysis in the EIS.

6. Wall Canyon WSA

In the draft EIS two partial wilderness alternatives were considered. Alternative III in the draft EIS provided an adequate analysis of the planning and environmental concerns identified through the scoping process and the review of the draft EIS, and has been retained in the final EIS. Alternative II in the draft EIS did not offer a significantly different range of choices or responses to the issues. This alternative recommended as suitable 3,020 acres more than the partial alternative being considered in the final EIS. Due to the almost identical boundaries and acreages of the two alternatives, this partial alternative (Alternative II in the draft) has been dropped from further consideration in the EIS.

7. Little High Rock Canyon WSA

In the draft EIS three partial wilderness alternatives were considered. Alternative II and IV in the draft EIS provided an adequate analysis of the planning and environmental concerns identified through the

scoping process and the review of the draft EIS, and have been retained in the final EIS. Alternative III in the draft EIS did not offer a significantly different range of choices or responses to the issues. Boundaries, issues and impacts in the draft's Alternative III are similar to those in Alternative IV. Because of the lack of significant differences between Alternative III and Alternative IV, Alternative III has been dropped from further analysis in the EIS.

8. Little High Rock Canyon, High Rock Canyon and Yellow Rock Canyon WSAs

In the draft EIS Alternatives I and II examined the impacts of boundary road closures for the Little High Rock Canyon, High Rock Canyon and Yellow Rock Canyon WSAs. Alternative I examined impacts with boundary roads between the three WSAs closed and Alternative II examined the impacts of leaving the roads open. The intent of these alternatives was to examine the three WSA's as a unit or complex. Analysis showed that the only difference between the two alternatives was that opportunities for solitude would be slightly improved and ORV trespass would be slightly reduced by closing the boundary roads. Because the differences were slight between the two alternatives boundary road closures have been dropped from further consideration in the EIS.

Chapter 2

Alternatives

CHAPTER 2

THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

Since the pattern of future actions within the WSAs cannot be predicted with certainty, we have made projections of management actions to allow the analysis of impacts under the Proposed Action and alternatives. These projections are the basis of the impacts identified in this EIS. They represent reasonably feasible patterns of activities which could occur under the alternatives analyzed.

TUNNISON MOUNTAIN WSA
(CA-020-311)

PROPOSED ACTION (PARTIAL WILDERNESS)

7,660 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
12,990 Acres Non-wilderness

The Proposed Action designates 7,660 acres as wilderness. The remaining 12,990 acres are recommended as non-suitable for wilderness designation. These non-suitable portions include all public lands within the WSA north of Long Canyon; the southeastern portion of the WSA; a strip of land ¼ to ½ mile wide on the eastern edge of the WSA; and an isolated peninsula of land on the western edge of the WSA (see Map 2-1). The area would be managed primarily to protect wilderness values while allowing existing levels of livestock use to continue and to provide recreational access and opportunities.

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

The WSA would continue to provide 1,287 AUMs for portions of the South Horse Lake and Johnston Allotments for livestock use. The 7,660 acres designated wilderness would provide for 476 AUMs. Two, one acre reservoirs are proposed to be constructed in the suitable area and 12 miles of fence are proposed to be constructed in the WSA, of which approximately 4½ miles are planned to be constructed along the rim of Willow Creek Canyon. This livestock exclosure is also a wildlife habitat improvement project to improve riparian habitat and the trout fishery in Willow Creek. Approximately 2 miles of fence are planned within the designated area and 2½ miles are planned outside the designated area.

Approximately 7½ miles of pasture division fence are also planned for construction through the central portion of the WSA on a north-south axis as part of range management improvements. Approximately 2 3/4 miles of fence are to be built within the designated area and 4 3/4 miles will be built in the non-designated area.

Maintenance of the 6 reservoirs and approximately 5 miles of fence within the suitable area, and five reservoirs and 11 miles of fence outside the WSA would continue at its current frequency. Fence and spring maintenance is usually done on foot or on horseback. However, if major maintenance is required, a pickup truck would be required to transport materials. Reservoir maintenance generally requires use of track mounted heavy equipment. Fences and springs require annual inspection for minor maintenance and require major maintenance at five to ten year intervals. Reservoirs require maintenance at approximately ten year intervals. Yearly maintenance would amount to 4-6 trips in the suitable area with 6-8 trips in the non-suitable area. Cyclic spring and reservoir maintenance would be 4-6 trips every 5-years in each of the wilderness - non-wilderness areas.

Mineral Resource Management Actions

Under the Proposed Action 7,660 acres would be designated wilderness. Subject to valid existing rights, the area designated wilderness would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mining laws. The remaining 12,990 acres would be open for mineral entry.

The mineral development potential in the WSA is low. There are no mining claims recorded within the WSA and no past history of development for locatable or saleable minerals (sand, gravel, decorative rock). The potential for mineral occurrence is presumed low. Therefore, no mineral development activities are projected beyond current planning estimates of 15 to 20-years.

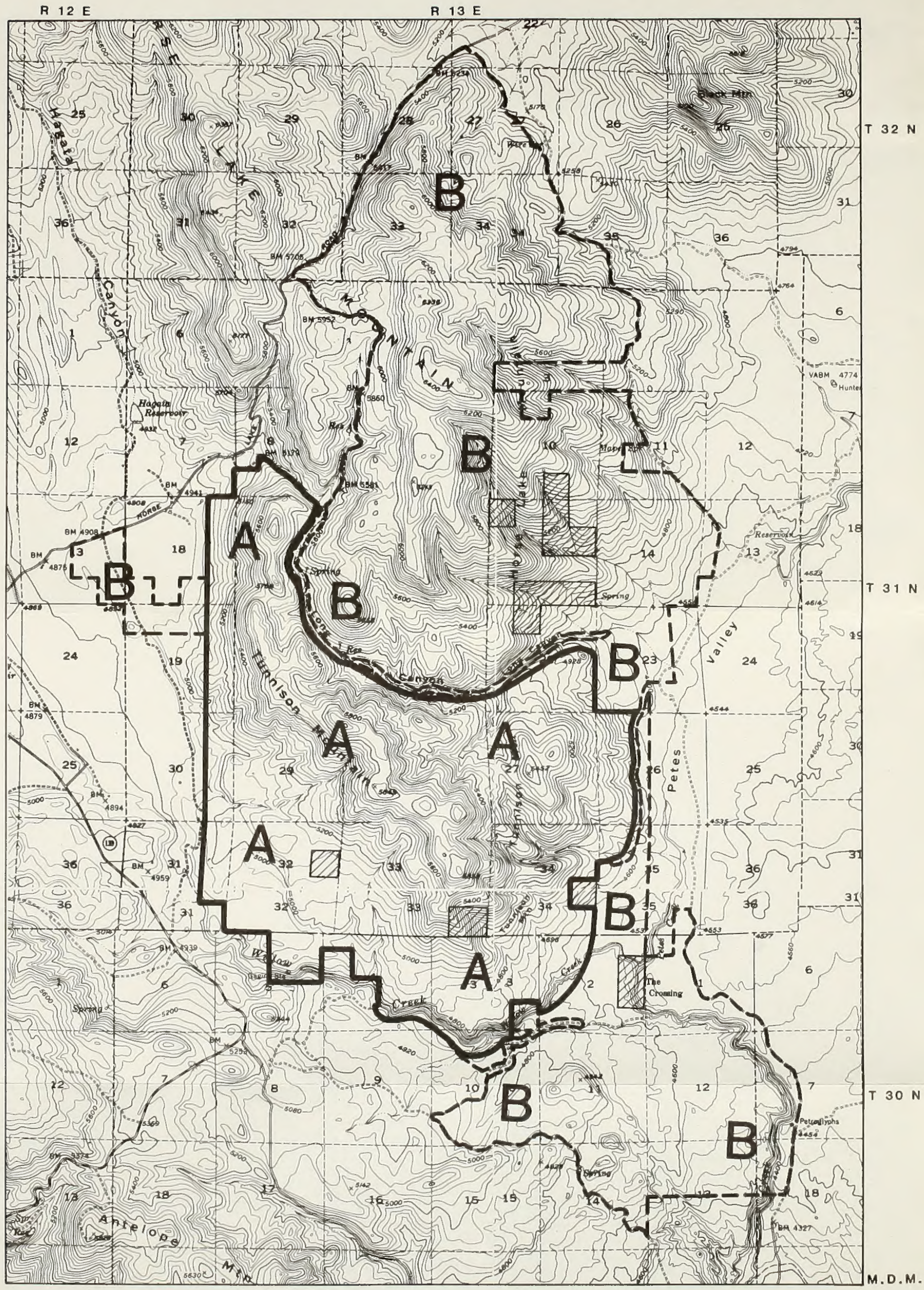
Energy Development Management Actions

There are no existing oil, gas or geothermal leases, and in view of current and past activity, future interest in leasable mineral development is not expected.

A three mile segment of a study corridor for a Trans Sierra utility corridor crosses the non-wilderness portion in the south of the WSA. Regional planning by Sierra Pacific Power Company has identified this study corridor as a high priority alternative. If constructed, three miles of high voltage powerline and four miles of service road would be built through the WSA.

Recreation Management Actions

All 7,660 acres of public lands in the WSA designated as wilderness would be closed to ORV use including the closing of one mile of access way. This would eliminate approximately 150 visitor days in the designated portion. However, this ORV use would be accommodated in the non-wilderness portion of the WSA. The remaining 12,990 acres would permit ORVs on 3¼ miles of existing trails. The entire WSA would remain open for other recreation activities, including hunting, horseback riding, fishing, camping, and sightseeing. Two trailheads of approximately ¼ acre each, would be built outside the designated area for access to Willow Creek Canyon. Willow Creek Canyon, though not designated wilderness in its



Proposed Action/Partial Wilderness

CA-020-311
TUNNISON MOUNTAIN
MAP 2-1

entirety, would be managed for non-motorized recreation uses. Visitor use would remain at approximately 2,400 visitor days/year. 1,800 non-motorized visitor use days are in the designated wilderness area and 600 motorized visitor use days in the non-wilderness portion.

4¾ miles of access roads into private parcels in the non-wilderness portion of the WSA at Willow Creek and the eastern slope may be built.

Wildlife Habitat Management Actions

The Willow Creek Planning Unit Land Use Decision, 1981, proposes that 4¾ miles of fence be constructed along Willow Creek to improve riparian vegetation, wildlife habitat, and the fishery. The fencing will exclude livestock from the creek except for limited watering access at seven locations. It will require approximately 10 vehicle trips to construct the fence.

Cultural Resource Management Actions

Fencing along the rim of Willow Creek Canyon is planned to protect cultural resources from livestock impacts. This will be accomplished by fencing described under Wildlife.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

20,650 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
0 Acres Non-wilderness
42 Non-WSA Recommended Suitable due to Cherrystem Road Closure

The All Wilderness Alternative would designate the entire WSA as wilderness. In addition, 42 acres of non-WSA public lands would be recommended as wilderness due to cherrystem road closures. Recreational ORV use would be eliminated in the WSA. Livestock grazing would continue as an authorized non-conforming use. Discretionary management actions would be permitted only to preserve wilderness values.

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

Livestock management actions under this alternative would be the same as described for the Proposed Action.

Mineral Resource Management Actions

The mineral actions are the same as the Proposed Action, except all lands in the WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral appropriations under this All Wilderness designation.

Energy Development Management Actions

No utility corridor construction would occur through the designated wilderness.

Recreation Management Actions

The entire WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. Seven miles of cherrystem roads in Long Canyon and to The Crossing, and 4¼ miles of ways would be closed. Two trailheads of approximately ¼ acres each would be developed outside the WSA for access to Willow Creek. This would eliminate 600 visitor days of recreation vehicle use.

Wildlife Habitat Management Actions

Wildlife habitat management actions under this alternative would be the same as those described for the Proposed Action.

Cultural Resource Management Actions

Cultural resource management actions under this alternative would be the same as those described for the Proposed Action.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

15,090 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
5,560 Acres Non-wilderness

This partial wilderness alternative for Tunnison Mountain WSA would create two separate areas of 7,100 acres and 7,990 acres for wilderness designation (see Map 2-2). These areas would be managed to protect wilderness values and allow existing livestock grazing to continue. The remaining 5,560 acres of non-wilderness would be managed primarily for livestock grazing, wildlife habitat, cultural resources and recreation, as provided for in the Willow Creek Planning Units Land Use Plan.

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

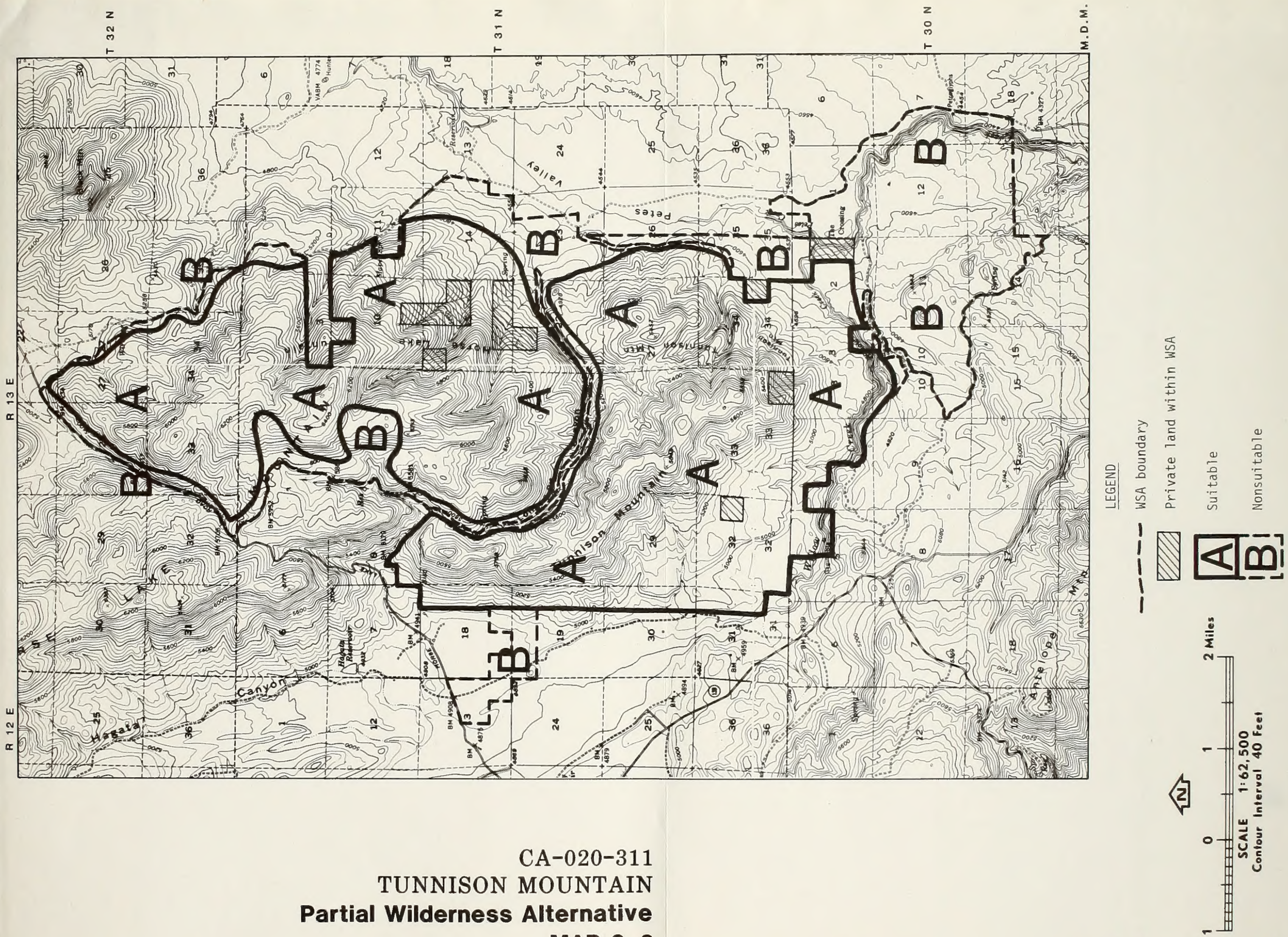
Livestock grazing and range management actions for this alternative would be the same as described under the Proposed Action, however, only four of the 11 reservoirs would be in the non-wilderness area. Maintenance would continue as described in the Proposed Action. The wilderness portion of the WSA would provide 940 AUMs out of the total 1,287 AUMs in the WSA.

Mineral Resource Management Actions

Management actions would be the same as under the Proposed Action, except that 15,090 acres would be withdrawn from mineral entry under the mining laws. No mineral resource development is projected within the WSA.

Energy Development Actions

Utility corridor actions for this alternative would be the same as those described for Proposed Action.



CA-020-311
TUNNISON MOUNTAIN
Partial Wilderness Alternative
MAP 2-2

Recreation Management Actions

The 15,090 acres of public land designated wilderness would be closed to ORV use, including closure of one mile of access way. The remaining 5,560 acres designated non-wilderness would be open for ORV travel on 3¼ miles of existing ways. The entire WSA would remain open for other recreation activities, including hunting, horseback riding, fishing, camping and sightseeing. Two trailheads of approximately ¼ acre each, would be built outside the designated area for access to Willow Creek. There would be a loss of 150 visitor days of ORV use in the wilderness portion and 450 visitor days of ORV use would remain in the non-wilderness area.

Wildlife Habitat Management Actions

Wildlife habitat management actions under this alternative would be the same as those described for the Proposed Action.

Cultural Resource Management Actions

Cultural resource management actions under this alternative would be the same as those described for the Proposed Action.

NO WILDERNESS/NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

0 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
20,650 Acres Non-wilderness

The entire 20,650 acre WSA would not be designated wilderness. The area would be managed under the existing Willow Creek Planning Unit's Land Use Plan with emphasis on recreation, wildlife habitat, cultural resource, and livestock grazing. Willow Creek Canyon would be managed as a special recreation area.

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

Livestock grazing management actions under this alternative would be the same as those described for the Proposed Action.

Mineral Resource Management Actions

The entire WSA would remain open for mineral exploration and development, however, the potential for mineral, geothermal, oil and gas resource is low. Due to the lack of application, leases or exploration, it is anticipated that no mineral development would occur in the next 15 to 20-years. Therefore, no surface disturbing activities are projected for the Tunnison Mountain WSA.

Energy Development Management Actions

Energy development actions under this alternative would be the same as those described for the Proposed Action.

TABLE 1
COMPARISON OF IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES FOR TUNNISON MOUNTAIN WSA

Issue-Related Resources	Proposed Action (Partial Wilderness)	All Wilderness Alternative	Partial Wilderness Alternative	No-Wilderness/No Action Alternative
Wilderness Values	Range improvement structures would improve overall naturalness throughout the entire 20,650 acre WSA. Local disturbance would be less than 1 acre on 2 reservoir sites and 5 miles of fence in the wilderness portion with the perception of naturalness impaired on a total of 220 acres. In the non-wilderness area 7 miles of proposed fence would slightly impair the perception of naturalness on 350 acres. Solitude would only be slightly improved in the wilderness portion by closure of 1 mile of way eliminating 150 visitor days of ORV use. Access to private land inholdings could require 2 miles of road in the wilderness portion which would impact naturalness solitude and primitive recreation and impair the perception of naturalness on 500 acres. In the non-wilderness portion access to private parcels that might be developed for cabins would need about 4½ miles of road reducing the perception of naturalness on up to 2,020 acres. In the non-wilderness part there would be 3 miles of powerline built in a proposed utility corridor that would impact naturalness, solitude and primitive recreation on up on 3,000 acres.	Range Improvement structures would improve overall naturalness but locally disturb less than 1 acre each on 2 reservoir sites. Twelve miles of fence are proposed with no surface disturbance. The perception of nativeness would be reduced on 570 acres. Solitude and primitive recreation would be improved by closure of 4½ miles of way and 7 miles of cherrystem road and eliminating 600 visitor days of ORV use. Access to private inholdings which could be developed for cabins would require 6½ miles of road. This would impact naturalness, solitude and primitive recreation on up to 2,520 acres.	Range improvement structures would improve overall naturalness but locally disturb less than 1 acre each on 2 reservoir sites and 10 miles of fence in the wilderness portion. In the non-wilderness portion naturalness would be reduced due to 2 miles of new fence. Solitude would be only slightly improved by closure of 1 mile of way, eliminating visitor days of ORV use. Access to private land inholdings in the wilderness portion would require 4 miles of road which would disturb naturalness solitude and primitive recreation. In the non-wilderness portion up to 2 miles of access might be needed. In the non-wilderness part of the WSA there would be 3 miles of powerline built in a proposed utility corridor which would impact naturalness, solitude and primitive recreation on up to 3,000 acres.	All the impacts would be the same as the Proposed Action except the 1 mile of way would not be closed.
Recreational ORV Use	No significant impact as only 1 mile of way would be closed. 150 visitor days of ORV use in the designated portion would be displaced. Vehicle recreation use would increase to 600 visitor days in non-wilderness part as a result of the closure of the designated portion.	Closure of 4½ miles of way and 7 miles of road would reduce vehicle use visitor days by 600.	No significant impact as only 1 mile of way would be closed. 150 visitor days of ORV use in the designated portion would be displaced. Use would increase to 600 visitor days per year in the non-wilderness portion.	No impact as no ways or cherrystem roads would be closed. Use is expected to remain at 600 visitor days for the foreseeable future.
Trans Sierra Utility Corridor	No impact as a 3 mile portion of powerline could be built in the proposed utility corridor in the non-wilderness portion.	No powerline could be built in the proposed utility corridor. An alternate location would have to be found outside the WSA.	No impact as 3 miles of powerline could be built in the proposed utility corridor in the non-wilderness portion.	No Impact as the 3 miles of powerline could be built in the proposed utility corridor.

Alternatives

Recreation Management Actions

The WSA would be open to ORV travel except for Willow Creek Canyon and the steep terrain along the central ridgelines of Tunnison Mountain and Horse Lake Mountain. Approximately 500 acres of Willow Creek Canyon would be closed to ORV use based on a land use decision in the Willow Creek Management Framework Plan. Willow Creek Canyon would be designated a special recreation management area and managed to provide for semiprimitive non-motorized recreation experiences. Two trailheads would be built outside, but adjacent to the WSA to provide access to Willow Creek Canyon.

Wildlife Habitat Management Actions

Wildlife habitat management actions under this alternative would be the same as those described for the Proposed Action.

Cultural Resource Management Actions

Cultural resource management actions for this alternative would be the same as those described under the Proposed Action. Additionally, interpretive signing would be developed to assist with cultural resource management in Willow Creek Canyon.

FIVE SPRINGS
(CA-020-609)

PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS/NO ACTION)

0 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
48,460 Acres Non-wilderness

The Proposed Action for the Five Springs WSA would not designate any of the 48,460 acres as wilderness. The area would be managed under the guidance of the BLM's Cal Neva planning units existing land use plan that emphasize livestock, wildlife, wild horses, cultural resource and dispersed motorized recreation.

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

The WSA would continue to provide a total of 3,491 AUMs for cattle and sheep in two allotments, with the Deep Cut Allotment using 521 AUMs and the Observation Allotment using 2,970 AUMs. Proposed projects to support existing levels of livestock use are limited to a one acre small reservoir in the Deep Cut Allotment and seven miles of fence in the Observation Allotment.

Maintenance of existing and proposed projects would continue. Fence and spring maintenance would normally be done on foot or on horseback. However, if major maintenance would be necessary, a pickup truck would be

required to transport materials. Reservoir maintenance generally would require use of track mounted heavy equipment. Fences and springs would require annual inspection for minor maintenance and would require major maintenance at five to ten year intervals. Reservoirs would require maintenance at approximately fifteen year intervals. The new projects would not increase existing maintenance trips over the existing levels. There are presently 6-8 annual trips for minor maintenance, and approximately 10 trips at 5-year intervals for cyclic major maintenance of springs and reservoirs.

The herding of one band of sheep would require the support of one or two tent camps which would be moved by truck at four day intervals during spring and late fall.

Mineral Resource Management Actions

The entire WSA would remain open for mineral entry under the appropriate laws and regulations. However, no filing of claims, exploration or development is anticipated over the next 15 to 20-years due to the lack of current or historical mining activity or visible evidence with respect to minerals. There are no mineral values of large or commercially extractable deposits present in the WSA.

Energy Development Actions

The entire WSA would be open for mineral leasing for oil and gas or geothermal. It is not anticipated that any leases would be issued or any exploration holes would be drilled. Previous leases for oil and gas development have been dropped and no current interest exists. The WSA is not considered valuable for geothermal resources.

A study corridor route for the proposed Trans Sierra Utility Corridor also passes through the WSA on a southwest-northeast axis following the present alignment of the trans continental telephone cable along the southeast side of the WSA. This alignment is considered a high priority route by utility industry planners. Should this corridor be selected for development, 9 miles of the high voltage powerline and 12 miles of service roads would be built within the WSA.

Recreation Management Actions

All 15 miles of existing ways and trails would be open to provide ORV access for recreation activities. 48,460 acres would be in the open ORV category. There are no recreation user facilities planned within the WSA in the foreseeable future. Visitor use is expected to remain at approximately 5,700 user days annually over the next 15 to 20-years. The major recreational use will continue to be hunting for antelope and upland game. This use is, except for less than 100 visitor days, all recreational vehicle oriented use (5,600 visitor days).

Wildlife Habitat Management Actions

No projects are proposed within the WSA.

Wild Horse and Burro Management Actions

Wild horses and burros would be gathered from the WSA at approximately three to four year intervals in order to maintain population levels within management guidelines. Horses would be herded from the WSA to outside trap sites with a helicopter during the summer/fall period. Activity within the WSA would be limited to a few days each time the herds were gathered.

Predator Control Actions

The Observation allotment in the northern portion of the WSA would continue to receive annual predator control activities by the appropriate Federal agency. Control activities for coyotes would occur in the spring/summer and again in late fall each year. Activities would include two to three aerial control flights during the spring and fall. Each flight would be over the WSA for part of a day. During the spring leg traps would be set and checked at two day intervals.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

48,460 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
0 Acres Non-wilderness

All 48,460 acres in the Five Springs WSA would be designated as wilderness. Under this alternative, recreational ORV use would be eliminated. Livestock grazing would continue as an authorized nonconforming use. Discretionary management actions would be permitted only to preserve wilderness values.

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

Livestock grazing and range management actions for this alternative would be the same as those described under the Proposed Action.

Mineral Resource Management Actions

Upon wilderness designation the entire WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral appropriations. There are no known or suspected mineral values of large or commercially extractable deposits in the WSA. It is projected that no mining claims would be filed prior to designation, therefore, all activity would end.

Energy Development Actions

The entire WSA would be withdrawn from oil and gas, and geothermal leasing exploration, and future development. The 9 miles of utility corridor along the southeast boundary could not be developed for future powerline needs.

Recreation Management Actions

The entire WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. The 15 miles of vehicle ways would be closed to use of recreational visitors. Recreational ORV use of 5,600 visitor days would be eliminated.

Wildlife Habitat Management Actions

No projects are proposed within the WSA.

Wild Horse and Burro Management Actions

Wild horse and burro management actions for this alternative would be the same as described under the Proposed Action.

Predator Control Actions

Predator control activities for this alternative would be the same as described under the Proposed Action.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

25,174 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
23,286 Acres Non-wilderness

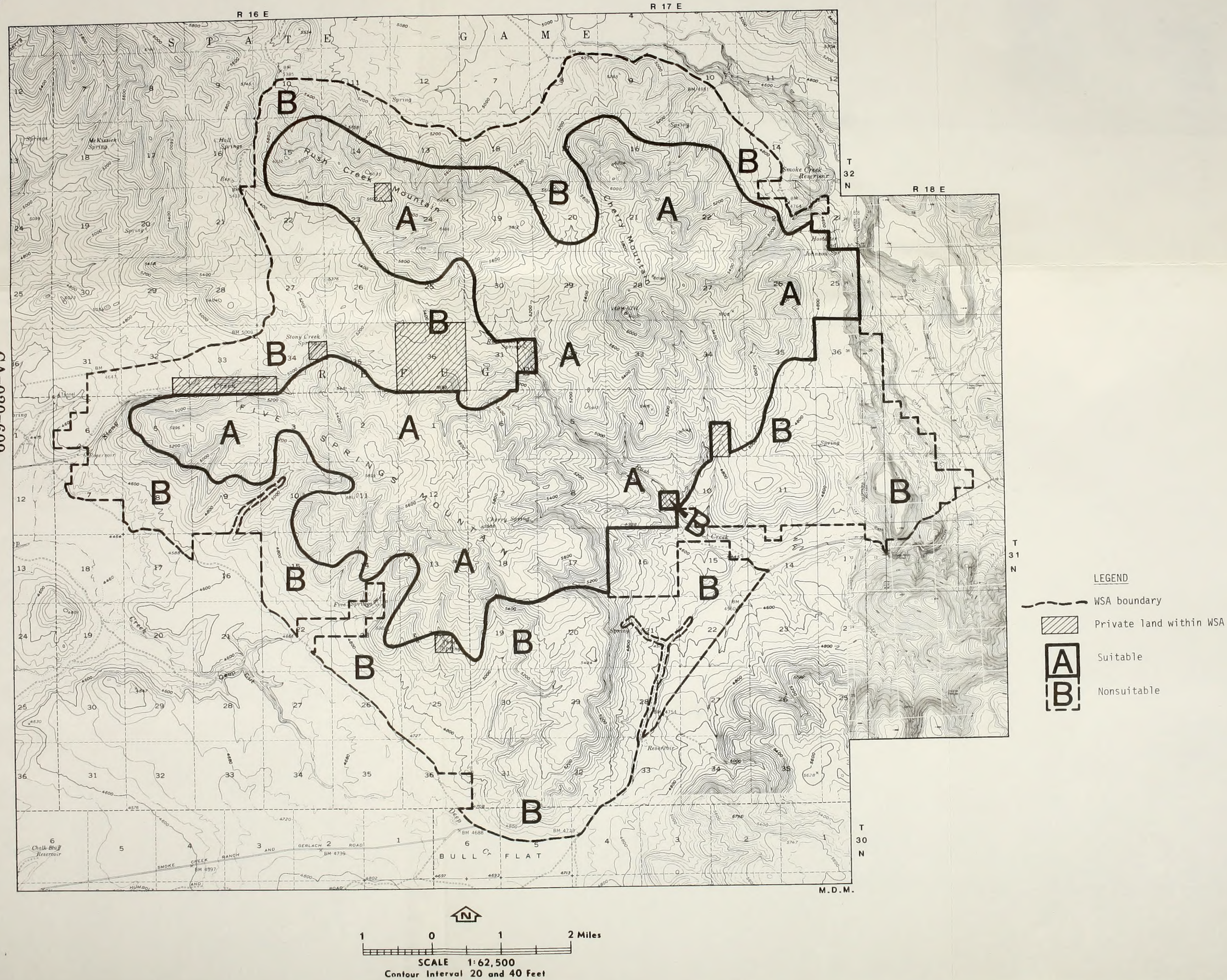
The Partial Wilderness Alternative would designate 25,174 acres as wilderness. This portion of the WSA would be managed to preserve wilderness values and permit existing livestock grazing operations to continue. The remainder of the WSA would not be designated as wilderness. Management of the non-wilderness portion would be under the guidance of the Cal Neva land use plan which emphasize the livestock, wildlife, wild horses, cultural resource and dispersed motorized recreation (see Map 2-3).

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

Livestock grazing and range management actions for this alternative would be the same as described under the Proposed Action. The portion of the WSA designated wilderness has six miles of fence proposed. The reservoir and remaining one mile of fence that are proposed would be in the non-wilderness portion.

Mineral Resource Management Actions

The 25,174 acres of the WSA designated wilderness would be withdrawn form all forms mineral appropriation. There are no known or suspected mineral values of large or commercially extractable deposits in the WSA. No mining claims with valid rights exist at this time and it is projected that none will be filed prior to designation. Therefore, all mineral exploration and development would end.



CA-020-609
FIVE SPRINGS
Partial Wilderness Alternative
MAP 2-3

The 23,286 acres not designated as wilderness would be open to mineral entry. However, no filing of claims, exploration or development is anticipated over the next 15 to 20-years due to there being no known mineral values of large or commercially extractable deposits in the WSA.

Energy Development Actions

The 25,174 acres designated wilderness would not be open to oil, gas or geothermal leasing. The remaining 23,286 acres would be available for oil and gas, and geothermal leasing and exploration. Based upon geology and the lack of a past history of exploration, it would be anticipated that no new leasing, exploration and development would occur in either the suitable or non-suitable areas.

A study corridor route for the proposed Trans Sierra utility corridor is in the non-suitable portion of this alternative. The alignment is considered a high priority alternative by utility industry planners. If developed this corridor would consist of 9 miles of high voltage powerline and 12 miles of service road built outside the portion of the WSA designated wilderness.

Recreation Management Actions

Although recreational ORV use would be eliminated on 25,174 acres, no ways would be closed and the nature of the terrain is such that visitor use would be expected to remain relatively constant, at 5,700 visitor days annually. There are no visitor facilities planned for development.

Wildlife Habitat Management Actions

No projects are proposed within the WSA.

Wild Horse and Burro Management Actions

Wild horse and burro management actions for this alternative would be the same as described under the Proposed Action.

Predator Control Actions

Predator control actions for this alternative would be the same as described under the Proposed Action.

TABLE 2
COMPARISON OF IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES FOR FIVE SPRINGS WSA

Issue-Related Resources	Proposed Action (No Wilderness/No Action)	All Wilderness Alternative	Partial Wilderness Alternative
Wilderness Values	Values of naturalness, solitude and primitive recreation would be reduced on up to 8,000 acres if 9 miles of powerline are built in proposed utility corridor in the non-wilderness area. The perception of naturalness would be reduced on 415 acres due to proposed range improvements. Wilderness values would be slightly reduced on 40,460 acres due to continued ORV use	Solitude would be slightly enhanced over present levels by closing 15 miles of way and eliminating 5,700 visitor days of ORV use. There would be some continued vehicle travel for range management. There would also be illegal ORV use on the perimeter of the area as no natural barriers exist. The perception of naturalness would be reduced on 415 acres due to range improvements.	Naturalness, solitude and primitive recreation would remain as exists on the 25,174 acres designated wilderness. There values would be lost on up to 8,000 acres in the non-wilderness portion when 9 miles of powerline is built in proposed utility corridor. Perception of naturalness reduced on 415 acres due to range improvements. Solitude would continue to be disturbed by 5,700 visitor days of ORV use on 15 miles of ways.
Recreational ORV Use	No impact as current recreational ORV use of 5,600 visitor days would continue.	Recreational ORV use of 5,600 visitor days would be foregone annually. Impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible. Close 15 miles of ways.	No significant impact. The non-suitable area contains the existing 15 miles of ways that support the 5,600 visitor days of recreational vehicle use.
Trans Sierra Utility Corridor	No impact. The 9 mile utility corridor would be available for future construction of high voltage powerline.	There could be no powerline built in the 9 mile utility corridor. Any future powerline would have to be built in a more expensive location outside the WSA.	No impact. The 9 mile utility corridor would be available for future construction of a high voltage powerline.
Endangered Species	The potential for impacts on Scrutellaria holmgreniorum would not be significant due to the small number of possible surface disturbing activities and the mitigating measures available at each location. No activities are planned in are where plant is found.	No impact on endangered species. The one small stock pond proposed is located away from known population of Scrutellaria holmgreniorum.	The potential for impacts on Scrutellaria holmgreniorum would not be significant due to the small number of possible surface disturbing activities and the mitigating measures available at each location. No activities are planned in area where plant is found.

Alternatives

SKEDADDLE MOUNTAIN
(CA-020-612)

PROPOSED ACTION (PARTIAL WILDERNESS)

37,240 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
26,550 Acres Non-wilderness

The Proposed Action designates 37,240 acres of the Skedaddle Mountain WSA wilderness. The designated area contains the core mountainous area within the WSA encompassing the Skedaddle Mountains, Wendel Cliffs, portions of the Amedee Mountains and Big and Little Spencer Basins. This portion of the WSA would be managed to preserve wilderness values and permit existing livestock grazing operations to continue.

The remaining 26,550 acres would not be designated wilderness. This portion of the WSA would be managed under the guidance of the BLM's Cal Neva Planning Unit's existing land use plan that emphasizes management for livestock grazing, wildlife, cultural resources, and dispersed recreation (hunting, hiking, and ORV access). Geothermal exploration would occur on a 480 acre portion of the WSA within the Wendel Amedee KGRA (see Map 2-4).

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

The WSA would continue to provide a total of 2,996 AUMs for cattle and sheep in portions of three allotments. The Deep Cut Allotment provides 685 AUMs for cattle, the Cal Winter Range Allotment provides 524 AUMs for sheep, and the Twin Peaks Allotment provides 1,787 AUMs for cattle and sheep. The 37,240 acres proposed for wilderness designation under the Proposed Action/Partial Wilderness Alternative contain 58% or 1,738 AUMs of the total 2,996 AUMs in the WSA.

Proposed projects to support existing levels of livestock use are limited to one small reservoir in the Twin Peaks Allotment and one well development in the Deep Cut Allotment. The reservoir would be located within the wilderness designated portion of the WSA while the well development would occur in the non-wilderness portion.

Maintenance of existing and proposed projects would continue. Fence and spring maintenance would normally be done on foot or on horseback. However, if major maintenance would be necessary, a pickup truck would be required to transport materials. Reservoir maintenance generally would require use of track mounted heavy equipment. Fences and springs would require annual inspection for minor maintenance and would require major maintenance at 5- to 10-year intervals. Reservoirs would require maintenance at approximately 15-year intervals.

The requirements for herding of one band of sheep would require the support of one or two tent camps which would be moved by truck at four day intervals during spring and late fall.

Mineral Resource Development Actions

Under the Proposed Action, 37,240 acres would be designated wilderness. Subject to valid existing rights, the area designated wilderness would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mining laws. The remaining 26,550 acres would be open for mineral entry.

No mining development is anticipated within the WSA. In the area designated wilderness, affidavits of assessment for seven perlite claims expired in 1983. In the non-designated portions of the WSA the two mining claims would not be developed. There is no past history of mining development of any significance in the WSA and none is expected in the next 15 to 20-years. Development potential of saleable minerals is considered low due to the abundance of higher quality deposits with better accessibility outside the WSA.

Energy Development Actions

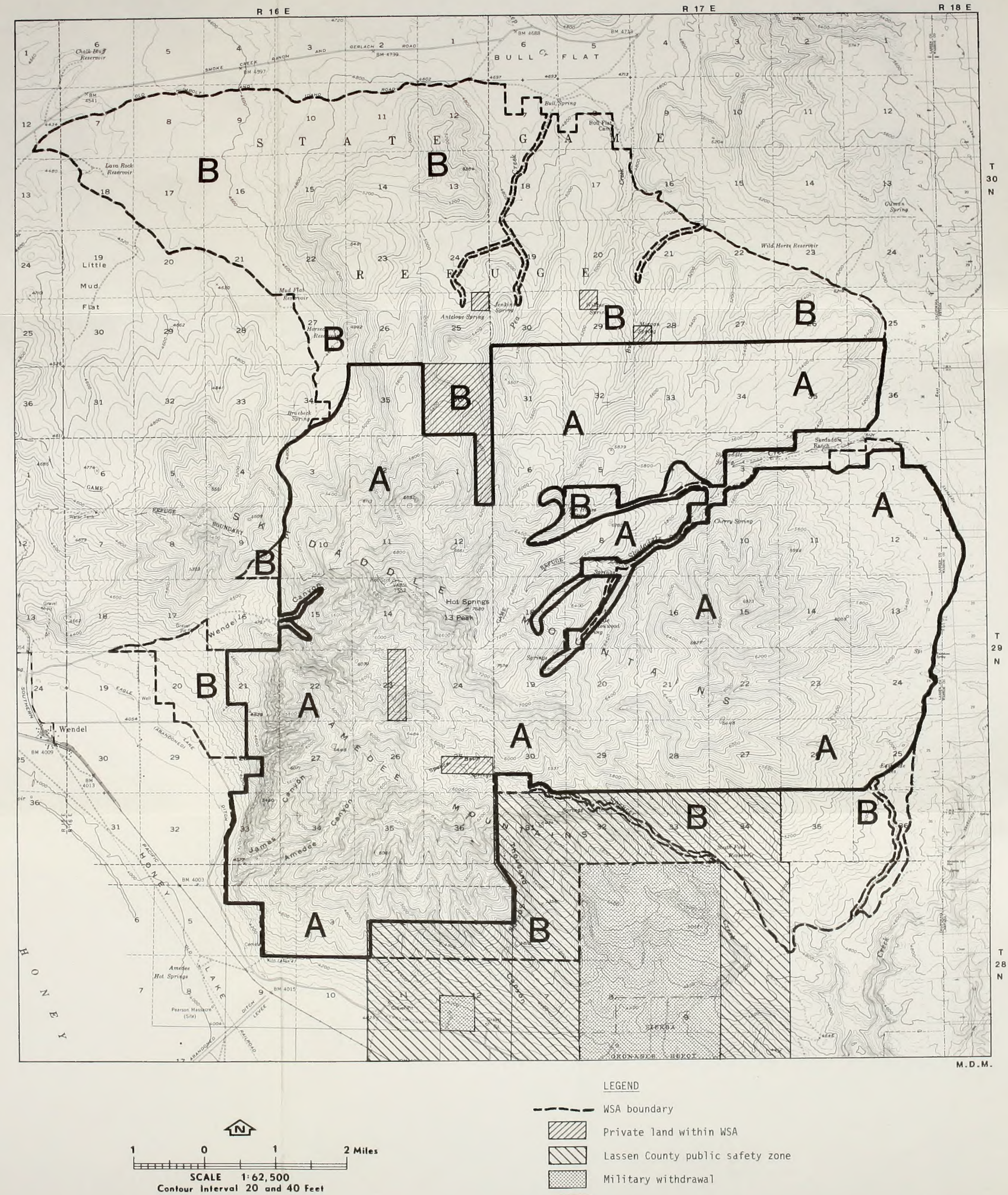
The designated area, 37,240 acres, would be withdrawn from oil and gas or geothermal leasing.

While there are currently no leases or lease applications within the WSA it is anticipated that geothermal exploration would occur outside the designated wilderness portion of the WSA in Sections 20 and 29 T. 29 N., R. 16 E. Surface disturbing activities would not be expected to exceed 5 wells with a total of 10 acres of disturbance and 2 miles of access roads along the lower slopes near the southern boundary of the WSA. If resource production activities were to occur, development facilities would be located outside the WSA on more gradual terrain.

A 7 mile segment of a proposed utility corridor alternative passes through the WSA on an east-west axis following the present alignment of the trans continental telephone cable along the northern side of the WSA. This alignment is considered a high priority alternative by utility industry planners. A second lower priority alignment has been identified along the eastern side of the WSA. This second priority alignment would not be available for development. If the high priority alignment is selected, up to 7 miles of overhead high voltage powerline could be built along the WSA's northern side in the non-designated area. Approximately 7 miles of associated service road would also be built near the powerline.

Recreation Management Actions

There are no recreation user facilities planned within the WSA. In the wilderness portion of the WSA, 9.5 miles of existing ways would be closed. Recreational ORV use is expected to remain at 4,200 user days annually over the long-term. All heavily used access areas will remain available for ORV use as these areas are in the non-designated portion of the WSA under this alternative. The major recreational use will continue to be hunting for deer, antelope and upland game. Non-ORV use is expected to remain at 300 visitor days per year.

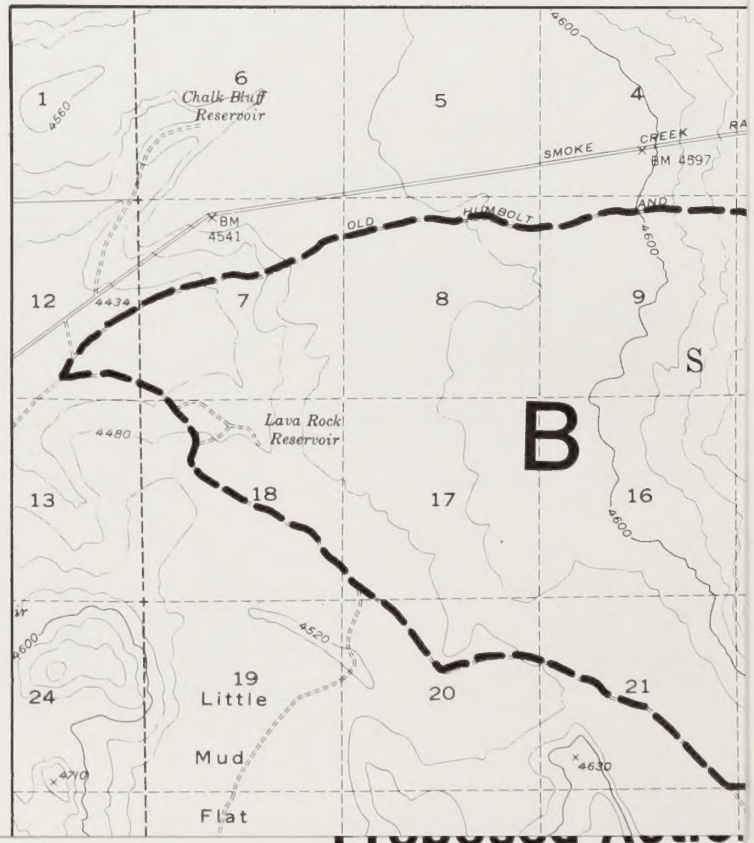


CA-020-612
SKEDADDLE

Proposed Action/Partial Wilderness

MAP 2-4

R 16



Proposed Action

Wildlife Management Actions

Expansion of upland game bird populations is planned through the construction of six upland game bird guzzlers. Guzzlers are small 16' X 16' water collection structures with a buried water collection tank. Installation generally requires use of a backhoe tractor to excavate the area for the tank and dig holes for the collection apron supports. Total disturbed area is usually 30' X 30'. Guzzlers are to be located on lower slopes around the Skedaddle-Amedee Mountains. Exact locations have not yet been determined, but all six will be located in areas not recommended for designation.

Maintenance of three existing guzzlers, two in the recommended suitable and one in the non-suitable portion of the WSA, would require infrequent light vehicle or helicopter transportation of materials. California Department of Fish and Game and private land owner cooperative spring developments require periodic use of a backhoe to cleanout and repair springs. Springs are located on private inholdings at the end of cherry-stem roads and ways outside the designated portion of the WSA.

Wild Horse and Burro Management Actions

Wild horses and burros would be gathered from the WSA at approximately 3 to 4-year intervals in order to maintain population levels within management guidelines. Horses would be helicopter herded from the WSA to two trap sites during the summer/fall period. One trap site on the northern edge of the WSA is located within ½ mile of the WSA's boundary road in T.30N., R.17E., Section 22, S½ in the non-designated area. A second trap site is located just ¼ mile outside of the WSA in adjacent WSA CA-020-615. Portable corral panels would be trucked to the trap site, set up and used during the trapping period. Trapped horses are removed using tractor trailers. Corral panels are removed following trapping. Activity within the WSA would be limited to a few days each time the herds were gathered.

Predator Control Actions

The WSA would continue to receive annual predator control activities by the appropriate Federal agency. Control activities for coyotes would occur in the spring/summer and again in late fall each year. Activities would include aerial control flights during the spring and fall. During the spring the leg traps would be set and checked at 2 day intervals.

Army Demolition Actions

Demolition of surplus ammunition at the Sierra Army Depot 2 miles from the southern boundary will continue on a periodic basis. This creates noise, dust, and smoke that drifts over the southern portion of the WSA.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

63,790 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
0 Acres Non-wilderness

All 63,790 acres of the Skedaddle WSA would be designated wilderness. This represents the maximum possible acreage that could be designated wilderness. Except as provided for under grandfathered uses and valid existing rights at the time of designation, the entire WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mining laws from oil and gas and from geothermal leasing. The entire WSA would be closed to ORV use and would not be available for utility corridor development. Livestock grazing would continue as an authorized non-conforming use. Discretionary management actions would be permitted only to preserve wilderness values.

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

The livestock grazing and range management activities for this All Wilderness Alternative is the same as described for the Proposed Action.

Mineral Resource Development Actions

The entire WSA, 63,790 acres, would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mining laws subject to valid existing rights. No mining claims with valid existing rights exist or are anticipated in the WSA prior to designation, therefore, no mining activities are projected within the WSA.

Energy Development Actions

The entire WSA would be withdrawn from oil and gas and from geothermal leasing. No geothermal exploration or development would occur since there are no current leases and none would be anticipated prior to designation. The utility corridor alignments along the northern and eastern sides of the WSA would not be available for development.

Recreation Management Actions

The entire WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. The 47 miles of vehicle ways and 15 miles of roads would be closed to use of recreational vehicles. Recreational ORV use would be expected to decrease by 3570 visitor days per year following the restriction of vehicle access.

Wildlife Management Actions

Wildlife management actions under this alternative are the same as described under the Proposed Action.

Wild Horse and Burro Management Actions

Wild horse and burro management actions for this alternative would be the same as described for the Proposed Action.

Predator Control Actions

Predator control activities would be the same for this alternative as described under the Proposed Action.

Army Demolition Actions

Army demolition actions at the Sierra Army Depot would continue as described under the Proposed Action.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

24,510 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
39,280 Acres Non-wilderness

The partial wilderness alternative for Skedaddle Mountain WSA would designate 24,510 acres wilderness. This portion of the WSA would be managed to protect wilderness values and permit existing livestock grazing operations to continue.

The remaining 39,780 acres would not be designated wilderness. This portion of the WSA would be managed under the guidance of the BLM's Cal Neva Planning Unit's existing land use plan that emphasizes livestock grazing, wildlife, cultural resources, and dispersed recreation (hiking, hunting, and ORV access). Geothermal exploration would occur on a 480 acre portion of the WSA within the Wendel Amedee KGRA (see Map 2-5).

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

The livestock grazing and range management actions under this alternative would be the same as described under the Proposed Action.

Mineral Resource Development Actions

Under the Partial Wilderness Alternative, 24,510 acres would be designated wilderness. The area designated wilderness would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mining laws. The remaining 39,280 acres would be open for mineral entry.

There is no past history of mineral development of any significance in the WSA and none is expected in the next 15 to 20-years. Potential for salable minerals is low. Therefore, no mineral development is anticipated within any of the WSA.

Energy Development Actions

The designated area, 24,510 acres, would be withdrawn from oil and gas or geothermal leasing. The potential for oil and gas is unknown.

While there are currently no leases or lease applications within the WSA it is anticipated that Geothermal exploration would occur. Surface disturbing activities would not be expected to exceed five wells with a total of 10 acres of disturbance and 2 miles of access roads along the lower slopes near the southern boundary of the WSA. If resource production activities were to occur, development facilities would be located outside the WSA on more gradual terrain.

A proposed utility corridor route passes through the WSA on an east-west axis following the present alignment of the trans continental telephone cable along the northern side of the WSA. This alignment is one of six preliminary alternative routes under consideration for completion of a Trans Sierra utility corridor. Only one alignment will eventually be selected. This alignment is considered a high priority route by utility industry planners. A second lower priority alignment has been identified along the eastern side of the WSA. It is anticipated that the high priority alignment would be selected and up to 7 miles of overhead high voltage powerline could be built along the WSA's northern side. Approximately 7 miles of associated service road would also be built near the powerline. If the low priority alignment is selected, 10 miles of powerline and 10 miles of service road would be built within the WSA.

Recreation Management Actions

Recreation management actions for this alternative are the same as described under the Proposed Action except that only five miles of ways would be closed to ORV.

Wildlife Management Actions

Wildlife management actions would be the same as described for the Proposed Action.

Wild Horse and Burro Management Actions

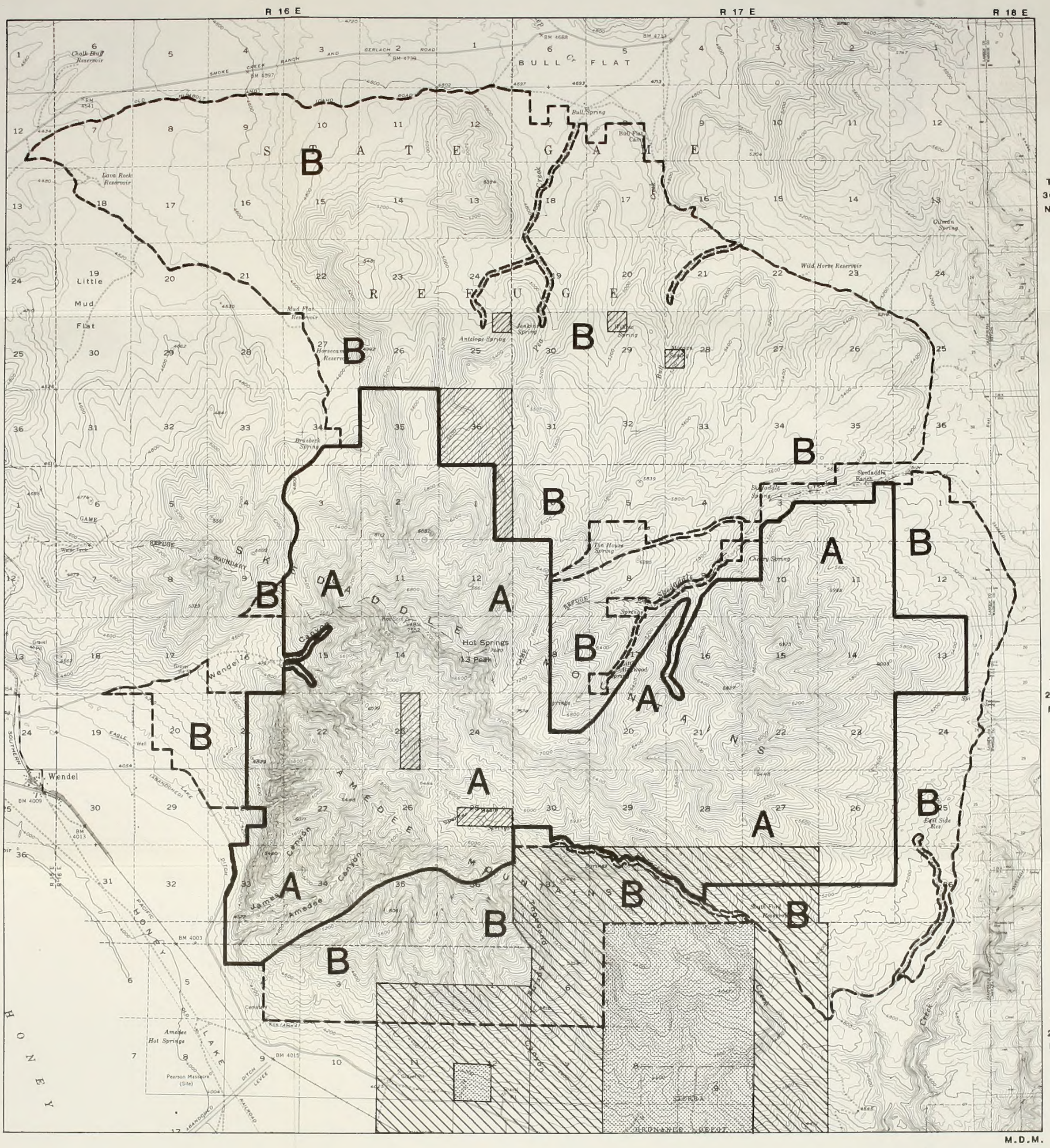
Wild horse and burro management actions would be the same for this alternative as described under the Proposed Action.

Predator Control Actions

Predator control actions for this alternative would be the same as described for the Proposed Action.

Army Demolition Actions

Army demolition actions at the Sierra Army Depot would continue as described under the Proposed Action.


R 16 E
R 17 E
R 18 E
T 30 N
T 29 N
T 28 N
M.D.M.
BULL FLAT
STATE GAME REFUGE
Little Mud Flat
Wendel
Hot Springs
Amedee Mountains
Honey Lake
Skedaddle Ranch
Wild Horse Reservoir
Lava Rock Reservoir
Chalk Bluff Reservoir
Mud Flat Reservoir
Antelope Spring
Jenkins Spring
Bull Spring
Bull Flat Camp
Tin House Spring
Cherry Spring
Bruebeck Spring
Amedee Hot Springs
Pearson Massacre (Site)
East Side Res
Cemetery
Gravel Pit
Well
Spring
Sierra Ordnance Depot
B
A
B
B
B
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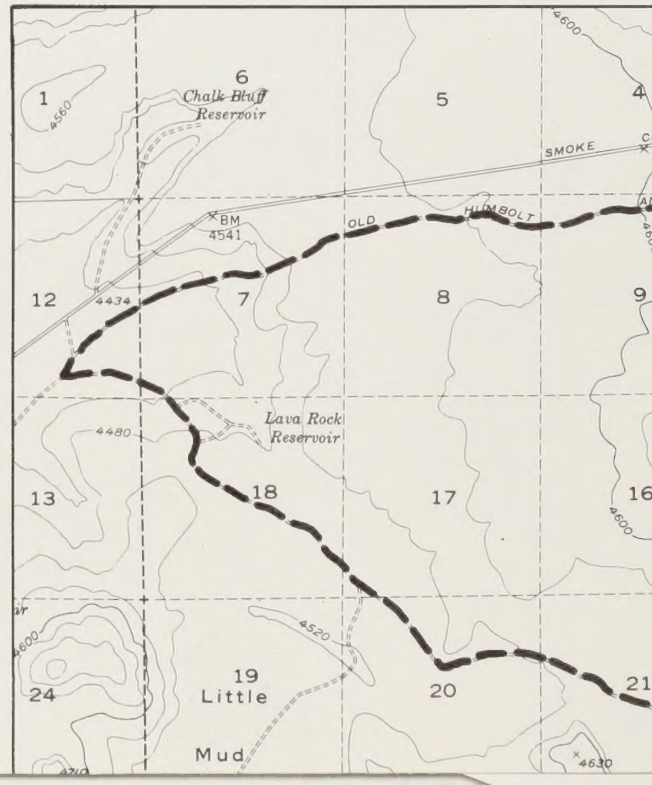

6
Chalk Bluff
Reservoir
1
4560
5
4
4600
SMOKE
BM
4541
OLD
HUMBOLT
12
4434
7
8
9
Lava Rock
Reservoir
4480
13
18
17
16
4600
4520
19
Little
Mud
24
20
21
4630

NO WILDERNESS/NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

0 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
63,790 Acres Non-wilderness

None of the 63,790 acre Skedaddle Mountain WSA would be designated as wilderness. The area would be managed under the guidance of BLM's Cal Neva planning units existing land use plan that emphasizes management for livestock, wildlife, cultural resources and dispersed recreation (hunting, hiking and ORV access).

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

Livestock grazing and range management actions for this alternative would be the same as described under the Proposed Action.

Mineral Resource Development Actions

Under the No Wilderness Alternative, none of the Skedaddle WSA's 63,790 acres would be designated wilderness. The entire WSA would remain open for mineral entry under the appropriate mining laws and regulations. However, There has been little activity on seven perlite claims located in T.29N., R.16E., Sections 10 and 15, and no affidavits of assessment have been recorded since 1983. Two new placer claims have been located in 1985, T.30N., R.16E., Sections 10 and 11, but no development has occurred. There is no past history of mineral development of any significance in the WSA and none is expected in the foreseeable future. Potential for salable minerals is low. No mineral development actions are projected within the next 15 to 20-years for the WSA.

Energy Development Actions

Under the No Wilderness Alternative, none of the Skedaddle WSA's 63,790 acres would be designated wilderness. The entire WSA would remain open for oil and gas and for geothermal leasing. The potential for oil and gas is unknown.

While there are currently no leases or lease application within the WSA it is anticipated that geothermal exploration would occur in the KGRA area. Surface disturbing activities would not be expected to exceed 5 wells with a total of 10 acres of disturbance and 2 miles of access roads along the lower slopes near the boundary of the WSA. If resource production activities were to occur, development facilities would be located outside the WSA on more gradual terrain.

A proposed utility corridor route passes through the WSA on an east-west axis following the present alignment of the trans continental telephone cable along the northern side of the WSA. This alignment is one of six preliminary alternative routes under consideration for completion of a

Trans Sierra utility corridor. Only one alignment will eventually be selected. This alignment is considered a high priority route by utility industry planners. A second lower priority alignment has been identified along the eastern side of the WSA. If the high priority alignment is selected, up to 7 miles of overhead high voltage powerline could be built along the WSA's northern side. Approximately 7 miles of associated service road would also be built near the powerline. If the low priority alignment is selected, 10 miles of powerline and 10 miles of service road would be built within the WSA.

Recreation Management Actions

There are no recreation user facilities planned within the WSA. Recreational ORV visitor use is expected to remain at 4,200 user days annually over the long-term. The major recreational use will continue to be hunting for deer, antelope and upland game. Off-road vehicle use would be permitted along boundary roads and on 47 miles of existing ways in the WSA. Non-ORV use would remain at 300 visitor days.

Wildlife Management Actions

Wildlife management actions for this alternative would be the same as described for the Proposed Action.

Wild Horse and Burro Management Actions

Wild horse and burro management actions for this alternative would be the same as described under the Proposed Action.

Predator Control Actions

Predator control actions for this alternative would be the same as described under the Proposed Action.

Army Demolition Actions

Army demolition actions at the Sierra Army Depot would continue as described under the Proposed Action.

TABLE 3
COMPARISON OF IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES FOR THE SKEDADDLE WSA

Issue-Related Resources	Proposed Action Partial Wilderness	All Wilderness Alternative	Partial Wilderness Alternative	No Wilderness/No Action Alternative
Wilderness Values	Naturalness reduced on 10 acres due to range improvements in wilderness portion. Solitude in wilderness portion would improve with closure of 8 miles of ways. Naturalness, solitude and primitive recreation would be adversely impacted on up to 7,000 acres in non-wilderness area by powerline construction in proposed utility corridor. Geothermal development could impact naturalness and solitude on up to 500 acres in the non-wilderness portion.	Naturalness reduced on 10 acres due to range improvements. Solitude improved by closure of 47 miles of ways and elimination of 4,200 visitor dyas of vehicle recreation. There would be some illegal ORV use on the perimeter of the area as no natural barriers exist.	Naturalness reduced on 10 acres due to range improvements in the wilderness portion. Solitude in wilderness portion would improve with closure of 11 miles of ways. Naturalness, solitude and primitive recreation would be adversely impacted on up to 17,000 acres in non-wilderness area if both powerlines were constructed in two proposed utility corridors. Geothermal development could impact naturalness and solitude on up to 780 acres in the non-wilderness portion.	Naturalness reduced on 10 acres due to range improvements. Naturalness, solitude and primitive recreation would be adversely impacted on up to 17,000 acres if both powerlines are constructed in the 2 proposed utility corridors. Geothermal development could impact naturalness and solitude on up to 500 acres.
Mineral Resource Development	No significant impact in 37,240 acres designated wilderness area due to no claims and low mineral potential. Non-wilderness 26,550 acres available but low mineral potential means activity not likely.	Negligible impact due to low mineral potential of the area.	No significant impact in 24,510 acres designated wilderness area due to no claims and low mineral potential. Non-wilderness 39,280 acres available but low mineral potential means activity not likely.	No impact as area would be open for minerals. Low potential does not indicate any development will occur.
Recreational ORV Use	Wilderness designation would close 8 miles of way. Very little impact as 39 miles of ways are open and the existing 4,200 visitor days of ORV use would occur in the non-wilderness portion.	Loss of 4,200 visitor days of recreation vehicle use as 47 miles of ways and 15 miles of road would be closed.	Wilderness designation would close 11 miles of ways. Very little impact as 36 miles of ways are open and the existing 4,200 visitor days of ORV use would use the non-wilderness portion.	No impact as existing 47 miles of way would be open. Use is not expected to increase much beyond present 4,200 visitor days.
Geothermal Resource Development	Geothermal resource development on 1,040 acres of the Wendel/Amedee KGRA and 16,940 acres of prospectively valuable for geothermal area within the WSA would be foregone. Impact is minimal due to low potential and rugged terrain. The remaining 500 acres of the KGRA and 4,600 acres of prospectively valuable for geothermal area within the WSA would be available for development.	Geothermal resource development on 1,540 acres of Wendel/Amedee KGRA and 21,540 acres of prospectively valuable for geo- of Wendel/Amedee KGRA and 21,540 acres of prospectively valuable for geothermal area within the WSA would be foregone. Impact is considered minimal due to low potential and rugged terrain.	Geothermal resource development on 760 acres of the Wendel/Amedee KGRA and 14,380 acres of prospective valuable for geothermal area within the WSA would be foregone. Impact is minimal due to low potential and rugged terrain. The remaining 780 acres of the KGRA and 7,160 acres of prospectively valuable for geothermal area within the WSA would be available for development.	No impact on Geothermal resource development.

Alternatives

TABLE 3
COMPARISON OF IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES FOR THE SKEDADDLE WSA

Issue-Related Resources	Proposed Action Partial Wilderness	All Wilderness Alternative	Partial Wilderness Alternative	No Wilderness/No Action Alternative
Trans Sierra Utility Corridor	No impact on 7 miles of high priority alignment through the non-designated area. Four miles of a 10 mile segment of low priority alignment could not be built through the designated area.	No development of 7 miles of high priority potential utility line or 10 miles of low priority utility line would occur through the WSA.	No impact on 7 miles of high priority or 10 miles of low priority alignment through the non-designated area.	No impact on 2 segments of potential Trans Sierra Utility corridor alignments. Either the 7 mile portion of a high priority alignment or the 10 mile portion of a low priority alignment could be developed.
Private Waters	No significant change in impact as wilderness use would replace some of vehicle use presently taxing place.	Trespass on private water sources on inholdings would decline.	No significant change in impact as wilderness use would replace some of the vehicle use presently taking place.	No change in present situation where during hunting season trespass on springs on private inholdings occurs.

DRY VALLEY RIM
(CA-020-615)

PROPOSED ACTION (PARTIAL WILDERNESS)

52,845 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
42,180 Acres Non-wilderness

The Proposed Action for the Dry Valley Rim WSA would designate 52,845 acres as wilderness. This portion of the WSA would be managed to preserve wilderness values and permit existing livestock grazing operations to continue. The remainder of the WSA would not be designated as wilderness. Management of the non-wilderness portion would be under the guidance of the Cal Neva land use plan which emphasizes the livestock, wildlife, recreation, cultural resource and wild horse values of the area (see Map 2-6).

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

The WSA would continue to provide 4,021 AUMs of livestock forage for cattle and sheep in two allotments. Approximately 2,200 AUMs are within the suitably recommended area. The Twin Peaks Allotment accounts for 3,735 AUMs with Nevada Winter Range Allotment cattle and sheep using the remaining 286 AUMs. Proposed projects to support the existing levels of livestock use include three reservoirs in the non-suitable area. Total surface disturbance for these projects would be approximately 2 acres.

Maintenance of 19 existing water developments inside the recommended suitable area and 16 existing and proposed projects outside would continue with 10 trips annually in the wilderness area and 15 trips annually in the non-wilderness portion of the WSA. Spring maintenance would usually be done on foot or on horseback. However, if major maintenance would be necessary pickup truck would be required to transport materials. Reservoir maintenance would require use of track mounted heavy equipment. Springs would require annual inspection for minor maintenance and require major maintenance at 5 to 10-year intervals. Reservoirs would require maintenance at approximately 15-year intervals.

The requirements for herding of one band of sheep on the WSA would require the support of one or two tent camps which would be moved by truck at four day intervals during spring and late fall.

Mineral Resource Development Actions

A portion of the WSA including 52,845 acres would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Assuming that no mining claims with valid rights exist at the time of designation all mineral exploration and development activities would end. There are no known or anticipated mineral deposits in the designated wilderness area with the potential to be claimed and have a valid discovery made prior to designation.

The 42,180 acres not designated wilderness would remain open to mineral entry. Over the next 15 to 20-years, it is projected that a 150 acre open pit mine for diatomite would be developed. An existing cherrystemmed road would provide access for the diatomite mine. A 20-acre sand and gravel deposit may be developed in the southwest corner. No new access would be required other than maintenance of approximately ¼ mile of an existing way.

Energy Development Actions

The 52,845 acres of the WSA designated as wilderness would remain closed to mineral leasing for oil and gas or geothermal resource development.

On the 42,180 acres not designated as wilderness, the lands would be available for leasing. The southern portion of this area is considered prospectively valuable for geothermal. However, there is a low potential for development with no interest expressed concerning applications, leases or exploration. Therefore no exploration or development actions are projected within or beyond planning estimates for the next 15 to 20-years.

The Trans Sierra utility corridor study has identified 2 study corridors that include portions of the WSA. A 9 mile long utility corridor running through the southwest third of the WSA would be voided. This is one of six preliminary alternative routes under consideration to cross the Sierra Nevadas. Development of the eastern corridor would include 10 miles of high voltage powerline and 15 miles of access roads. The corridor along the northwest boundary would be developed outside the WSA.

Recreation Management Actions

Approximately one-half of the WSA, 42,180 acres would be closed to recreational ORV use. This would result in the closure of approximately 12 miles of ways. The Lassen Motorcycle Club Enduro that uses ways and trails in the southwest corner of the WSA would be relocated outside the WSA. Access by vehicles to most of the heavy hunting areas within the WSA would be eliminated. A decline in ORV visitor use days is expected from 4,000 to 3,200.

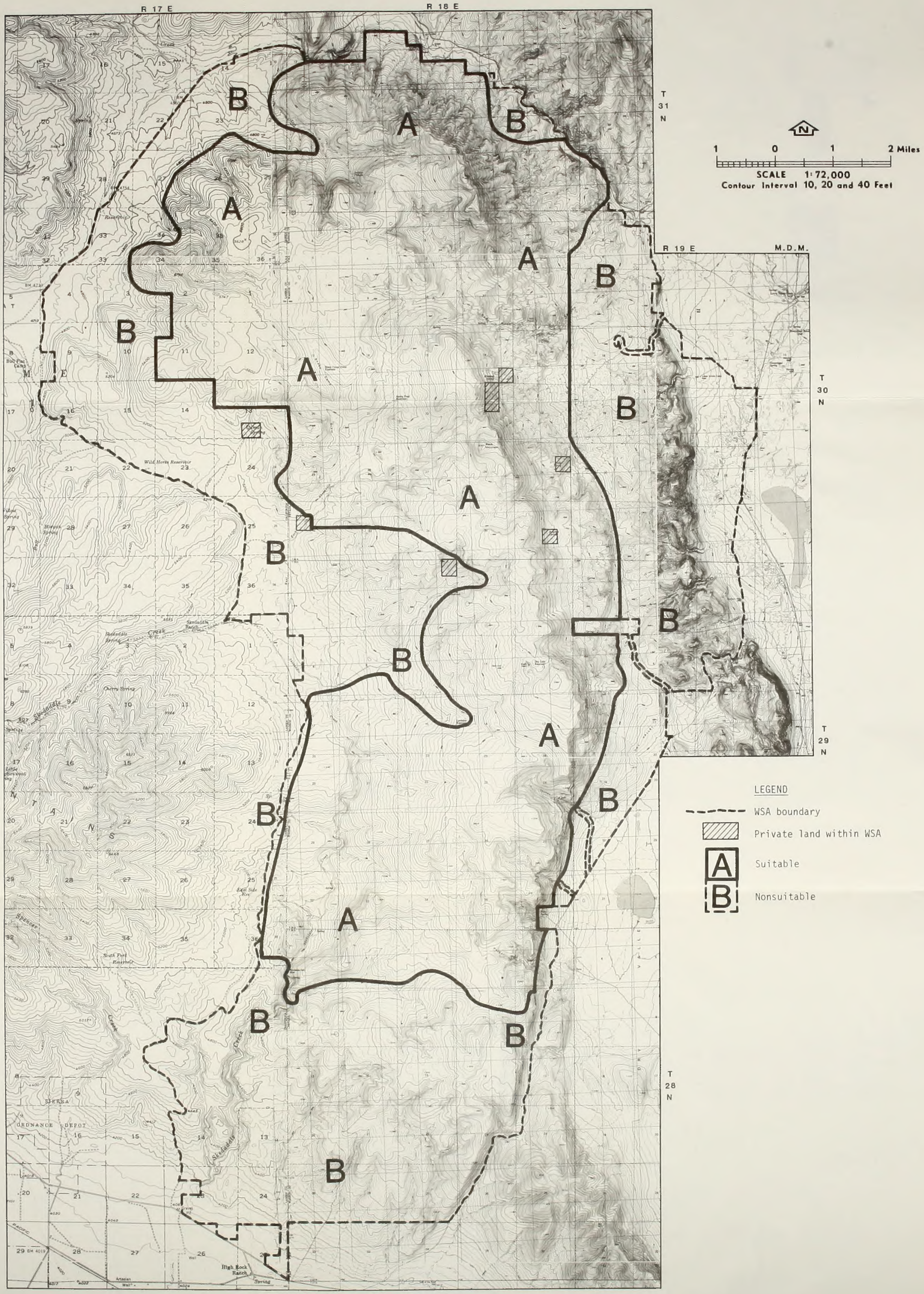
Wild Horse and Burro Management Actions

Wild horses and burros would be gathered from the WSA at approximately 3 to 4-year intervals in order to maintain population levels within management guidelines. Horses would be herded to a trap site just inside the southwestern boundary of the WSA in the recommended non-suitable area with a helicopter during the summer/fall period. Activity within the WSA would be limited to a few days each time the herds were gathered. Portable corrals would be trucked in and horses would be trucked out of the WSA over ¼ mile of existing way.

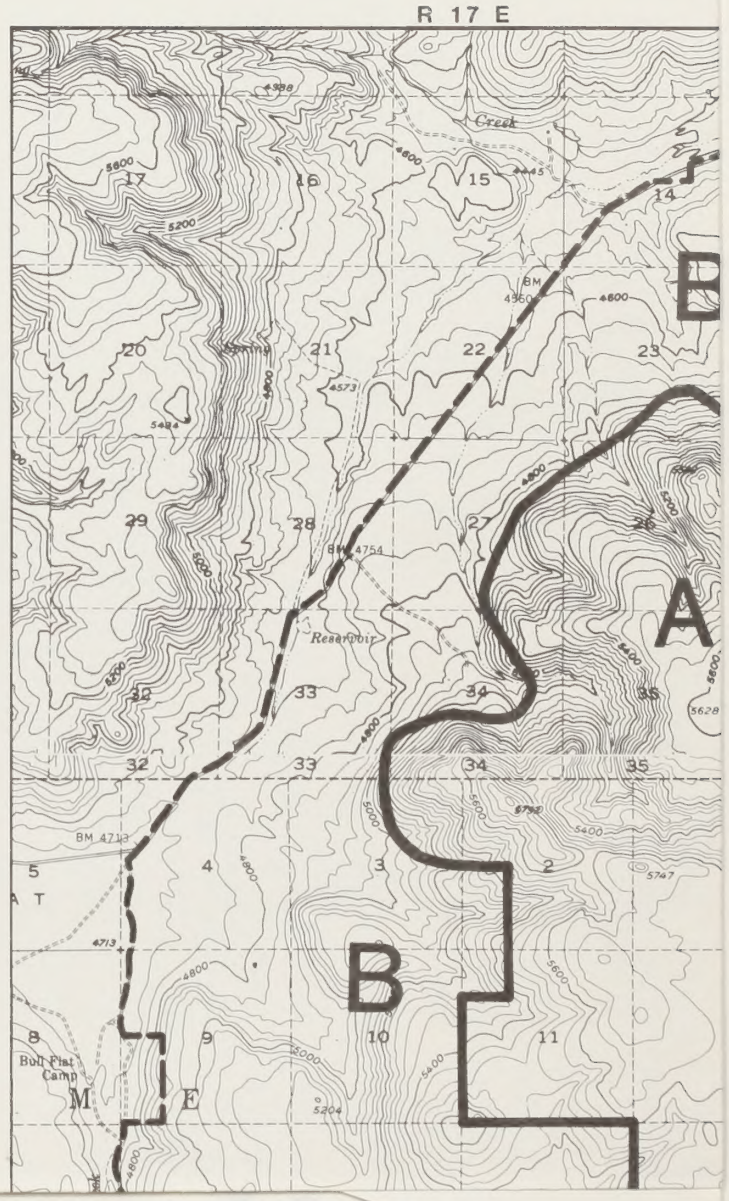
Army Demolition Actions

Detonation of surplus ammunition at the Sierra Army Depot two miles west of the southern boundary will continue on a periodic basis. This creates noise, dust and smoke that drifts over the southern portion of the WSA in the non-suitable area.

Alternatives



CA-020-615
DRY VALLEY RIM
Proposed Action/Partial Wilderness
MAP 2-6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Reservoir
Bull Flat Camp
BM 4754
BM 4713
BM 4360
A
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E

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

95,025 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
0 Acres Non-wilderness

The All Wilderness Alternative would designate the entire 95,025 acres of the Dry Valley Rim WSA as wilderness. Under this alternative recreational ORV use would be eliminated. Livestock grazing would continue as an authorized non-conforming use. Discretionary management actions would be permitted only to preserve wilderness values.

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

Livestock grazing and range management actions for this alternative would be the same as described under the Proposed Action.

Mineral Resource Development Actions

The entire WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Assuming that no mining claims would have valid existing rights at the time of designation, all activity on the mining claims would end and the claims would become invalid. No new minerals exploration work will occur since claims could not be filed.

Energy Development Actions

The entire WSA would be withdrawn from oil and gas or geothermal leasing.

A utility corridor being considered for the Trans Sierra utility corridor study that runs through the southwest 1/3 of the WSA, as well as portions of the two other corridors on the northwest and east boundaries of the WSA, would not be available for development.

Recreation Management Actions

Recreational vehicle use would be eliminated in the WSA. All 47 miles of vehicle ways would be closed. The Lassen Motorcycle Club Enduro would relocate part of its route outside the WSA. A decline of 4,000 recreational ORV visitor days would be expected.

Wild Horse and Burro Management Actions

Wild horse and burro management actions for this alternative would be the same as described under the Proposed Action.

Army Demolition Actions

Army demolition actions at the Sierra Army Depot would continue as described under the Proposed Action.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

36,545 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
58,480 Acres Non-wilderness

The Partial Wilderness Alternative for the Dry Valley Rim WSA would designate 36,545 acres as wilderness. This portion of the WSA would be managed to preserve wilderness values and permit existing livestock grazing operations to continue. The remainder of the WSA would not be designated as wilderness. Management of the non-wilderness portion would be under the guidance of the Cal Neva land use plan which emphasizes management of livestock, wildlife, recreation, cultural resource and wild horse values (see Map 2-7).

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

Livestock grazing and range management actions for this alternative would be the same as described under the Proposed Action.

Mineral Resource Development Actions

A portion of the WSA including 36,545 acres would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. No mining claims now exist and it is anticipated that due to low potential for minerals at the time of designation, all mineral exploration and development activities would end.

On the 58,480 acres not designated wilderness, the lands would remain open to mineral exploration and development. The 150 acre open pit diatomite mine and 20-acre sand and gravel extraction described under the Proposed Action would also occur under this alternative.

Energy Development Actions

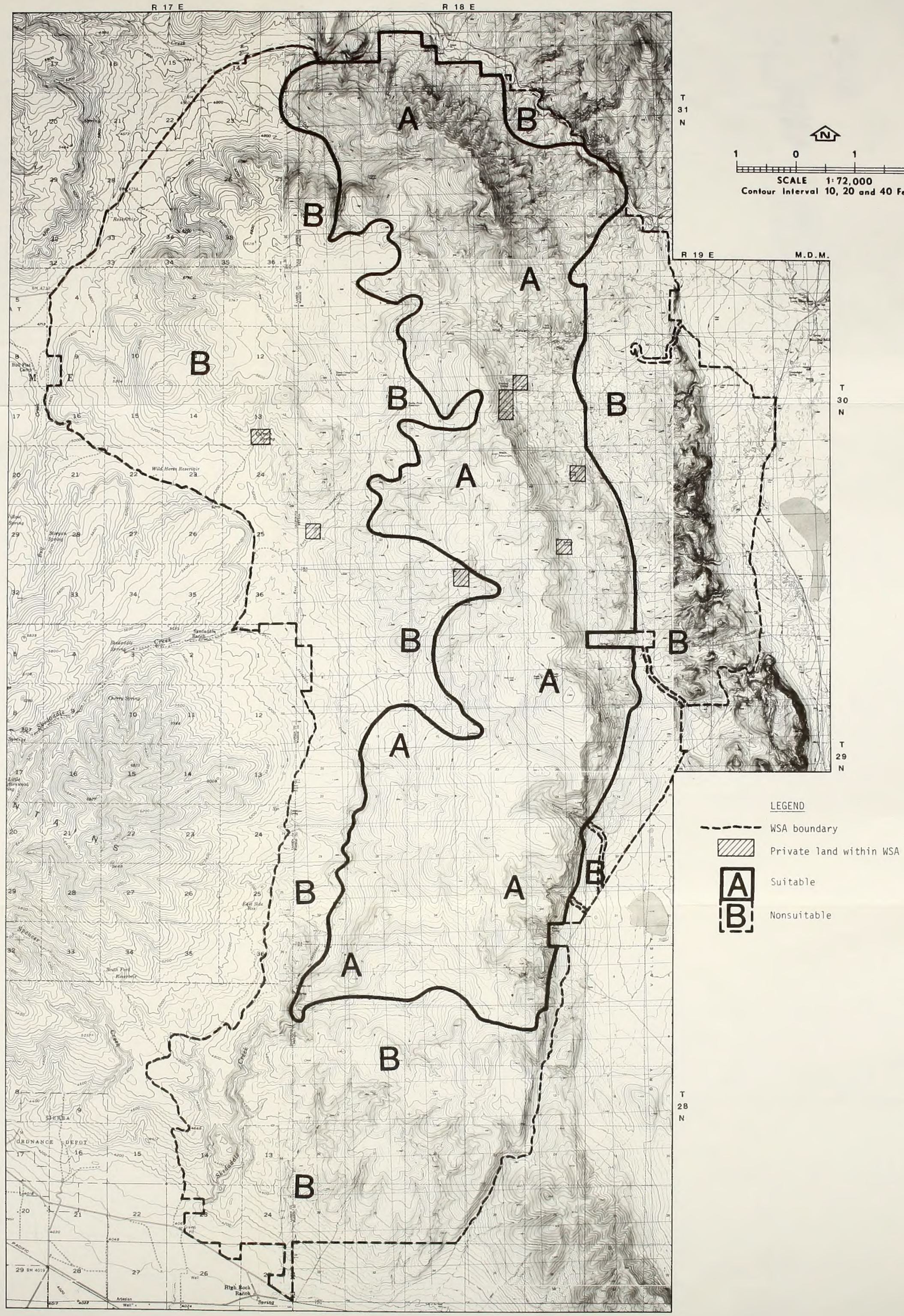
The 36,545 acres of the WSA designated as wilderness would remain closed to mineral leasing for oil and gas or geothermal resource development.

On the 58,480 acres not designated wilderness, the lands would be available for leasing. The southern portion of this area is considered prospectively valuable for geothermal. This area has a low potential for development and no expressed interest concerning lease applications or exploration. Therefore non-exploration or development activities are projected.

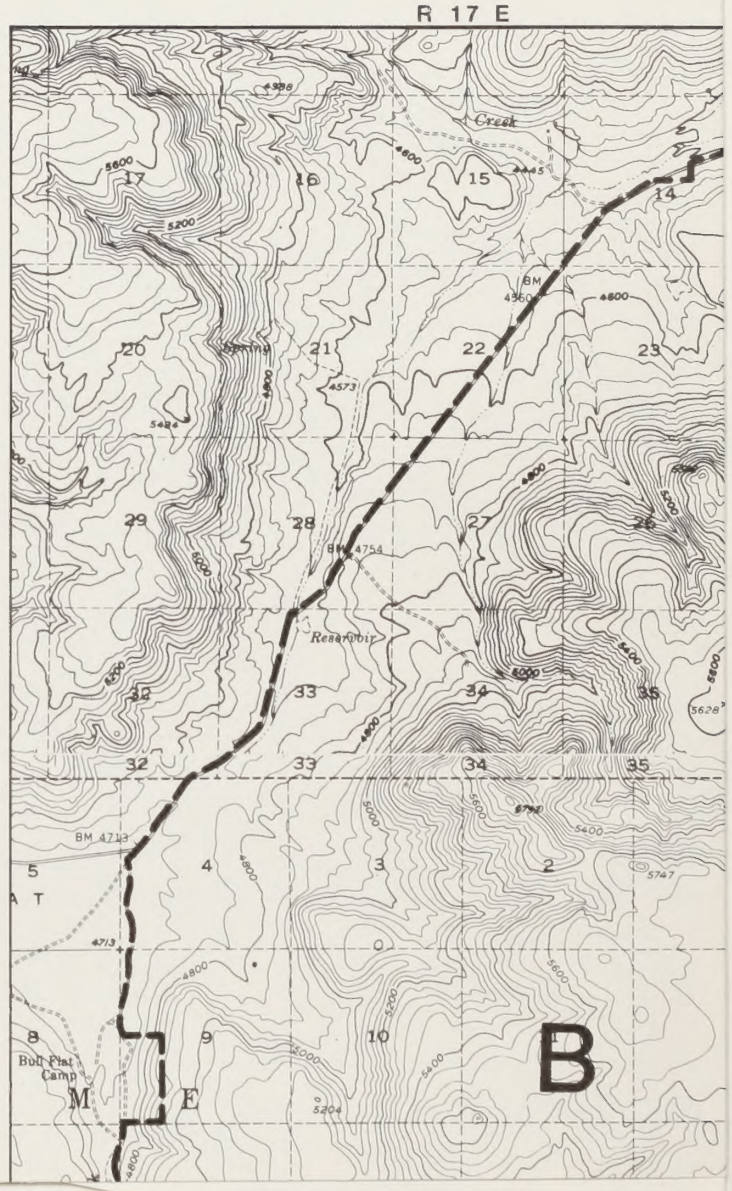
A utility study corridor running through the southwest third of the WSA would not be available for development. Two other study corridors on the northwest boundary and on the east boundary could be developed.

Recreation Management Actions

Approximately one-third, 36,545 acres, of the WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. All access ways would remain open. Off-road vehicle access to heavy hunting areas would continue. The Lassen Motorcycle Club Enduro would continue on present ways and trails. ORV visitor use days would be expected to remain constant at 4,000.



CA-020-615
DRY VALLEY RIM
Partial Wilderness Alternative
MAP 2-7


R 17 E
Creek
Spring
Reservoir
BM 4754
BM 4713
Bull Flat Camp
M
E
B

Wild Horse and Burro Management Actions

Wild horse and burro management actions for this alternative would be the same as described under the Proposed Action.

Army Demolition Actions

Army demolition actions at the Sierra Army Depot would continue as described under the Proposed Action.

NO WILDERNESS/NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

0 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
95,025 Acres Non-wilderness

None of the Dry Valley Rim WSA would be designated as wilderness under this alternative. The area would be managed under the guidance of the BLM's Cal Neva land use plan that emphasizes the livestock, wildlife, recreation, wild horses and cultural resources of the area.

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

Livestock grazing and range management actions for this alternative would be the same as described under the Proposed Action.

Mineral Resource Development Actions

The entire WSA would remain open for mineral entry under the appropriate laws and regulations. Over the next 15 to 20-years, it is projected, that no new claims would be filed due to the very low mineral potential of the area. A 150 acre diatomite claim and a 20 acre sand and gravel deposit in the southwest corner would be developed as described under the Proposed Action.

Energy Development Actions

The entire WSA would be reopened to mineral leasing for oil and gas or geothermal. The southern portion of this area is considered prospectively valuable for geothermal. No exploration or development is anticipated over the next 15 to 20-years due to the low development potential of the area.

All three utility corridors on the northwest and east boundaries and running through the southwest 1/3 of the WSA would be open to development. It is anticipated that 10 miles of powerline and 14 miles of access roads would be built over the corridor located along the eastern boundary, if any development of the corridors does occur. Additionally corridor development to the north would occur outside the WSA.

Recreation Management Actions

The area would remain open to recreational ORV use on 47 miles of ways and trails. Heavy hunting areas would continue to have ORV access. The

TABLE 4

COMPARISON OF IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES FOR THE DRY VALLEY RIM WSA

Issue-Related Resources	Proposed Action Partial Wilderness	All Wilderness Alternative	Partial Wilderness Alternative	No Wilderness/No Action Alternative
Wilderness Values	Designation of 52,845 acres of wilderness would result in a net benefit to the areas values of naturalness and solitude due to the elimination of 800 visitor days of recreational vehicle use. On the 42,180 acres not designated naturalness would continue to be impacted on 6,000 acres due to dust and smoke clouds from Sierra Army Depot. The perception of naturalness and solitude would be lost on 4,000 acres as a result of development of a 150 acre open pit diatomite mine and on 2,000 acres as a result of powerline construction on the eastern border. Development of a 20-acre sand and gravel site and new range improvements would result in only slight localized reductions in naturalness and solitude.	Designation of the entire area would result in a net benefit to the areas values of naturalness and solitude due to the elimination of 4,000 visitor days or recreational vehicle use. A 6,000 acre area would continue to be impacted due to dust and smoke clouds from Sierra Army Depot. Development of new range improvements would result in only slight localized reductions in naturalness and solitude.	Designation of 36,545 acres of wilderness would retain that area in its present undeveloped condition. It contains the most spectacular wildlife and scenery values. Impacts on the 58,480 acres not designated would be the same as the Proposed Action except there would not be a reduction of 800 visitor days of vehicle use as no ways would be closed.	The core area of Dry Valley Rim (36,545) acres is too rough and rugged and would not change in the foreseeable future. Over most of the rest of the area there will not be any significant change from the existing situation. Wilderness values of perception of naturalness and solitude will be impaired on a total of 6,000 acres by development of the diatomite claims and construction of a utility powerline. Development of a 20-acre sand and gravel site and new range improvements would result in only slight localized reductions in naturalness and solitude.
Mineral Resource Development	No impact as known deposits of diatomite and sand and gravel would be available for development.	Development of potential mineral resources in the WSA would be foregone. Known deposits of diatomite and sand and gravel would be foregone.	No impact as known deposits of diatomite and sand and gravel would be available for development.	No impacts as known resources can be developed.
Recreational ORV Use	Closure of 12 miles of way would eliminate 800 visitors days of ORV use. On the non-wilderness portion use is expected to remain at current levels for the foreseeable future.	Closure of 47 miles of ways would eliminate 4,000 visitor days of recreational vehicle use. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.	No impact as none of the 47 miles of ways would be closed.	No impact as the area and its 47 miles of ways would be open to vehicle use.
Trans Sierra Utility Corridor	One low priority utility corridors under study that passes through 9 miles of the WSA would be eliminated. Either of the other two corridors under study could be developed.	Wilderness designation would restrict, but not preclude potential development of the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor. One of the corridors under study would be eliminated but the other 2 have part of their corridors on lands outside the WSA.	Impacts are the same as for the Proposed Action.	No impacts as any of the three study corridors could be built on.

Alternatives

Lassen Motorcycle Club Enduro would continue on present ways and trails and ORV visitor use days would be expected to remain constant at 4,000.

Wild Horse and Burro Management Actions

Wild horse and burro management actions for this alternative would be the same as described for the Proposed Action.

Army Demolition Actions

Army demolition actions at the Sierra Army Depot would continue as described under the Proposed Action.

BUFFALO HILLS
(CA-020-619)

PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS/NO ACTION)

0 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
47,315 Acres Non-wilderness

The Proposed Action for the Buffalo Hills WSA would not designate any of the 47,315 acres a wilderness. The area would be managed under the guidance of the BLM's Cal Neva planning units existing land use plan that emphasize livestock, wildlife, wild horses, cultural resource and dispersed motorized recreation.

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

The WSA would continue to provide a total of 2,111 AUMs for cattle and sheep in the Twin Peaks Allotment. Proposed projects to support existing levels of livestock use are eight small reservoirs. For locations see Chapter 3 Range Map 3-14. There would be vehicle trips during a 5 to 7 day period for construction of the reservoirs.

Maintenance of existing and proposed projects would continue. Fence and spring maintenance would normally be done on foot or on horseback. However, if major maintenance would be necessary, a pickup truck would be required to transport materials. Reservoir maintenance generally would require use of track mounted heavy equipment. Fences and springs would require annual inspection for minor maintenance and would require major maintenance at 5 to 10-year intervals. Reservoirs would require maintenance at approximately 15-year intervals. Continuing maintenance would amount to 4 trips annually, with 10 to 15 additional trips on a 5-year interval for spring and reservoir maintenance. The new reservoirs would not significantly change this schedule.

The requirements for herding of two bands of sheep would require the support of one or two tent camps which would be moved by truck at 4 day intervals during spring and late fall.

Mineral Resource Management Actions

The entire WSA would remain open for mineral entry under the appropriate laws and regulations. However, no claims, exploration or development is anticipated within planning projections for the next 15 to 20-years because there are no known or suspected mineral values in large or commercially extractable deposits in the WSA.

Energy Development Actions

The entire WSA would be open to mineral leasing for oil and gas or geothermal. It is not anticipated that any leases would be issued or any exploration holes would be drilled due to the lack of potential. Previous leases in the area were allowed to lapse without any exploration activity.

A proposed 3 mile wide utility corridor overlaps 4 miles the southern boundary of the WSA. The majority of the corridor is outside the WSA with only approximately 2,000 acres along the edge of the corridor within the WSA. This alignment is not considered to be high priority by the utility companies. It could, however, at some date in the future be used to construct a high voltage powerline, if so, routing of the powerline would most likely occur outside the WSA as the topography there is more favorable.

Recreation Management Actions

The entire 47,315 acres would remain open for ORV use, including 26 miles of existing ways. There are no recreation user facilities planned within the WSA. ORV visitor use is expected to remain about 3,500 use days annually over the long term.

Wild Horse and Burro Management Actions

Wild horses and burros would be gathered from the WSA at approximately 3 to 4-year intervals in order to maintain population levels within management guidelines. Horses would be herded to a trap site with a helicopter during the summer/fall period. Activity within the WSA would be limited to a few days each time the herds were gathered. The trap site is located on the edge of the WSA at the end of an existing cherrystem road near the middle of Sec. 8, T.34N., R.19E.

Predator Control Actions

The WSA would continue to receive annual predator control activities by the appropriate Federal agency. Control activities for coyotes would occur in the spring/summer and again in late fall each year. Activities would include two to three aerial control flights during the spring and fall. During the spring leg traps would be set and checked at two day intervals.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

47,315 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
0 Acres Non-wilderness

All 47,315 acres in the Buffalo Hills WSA would be designated as wilderness. Under this alternative, recreational ORV use would be eliminated. Livestock grazing would continue as an authorized nonconforming use. Discretionary management actions would be permitted only to preserve wilderness values.

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

Livestock grazing and range management actions for this alternative would be the same as described under the Proposed Action.

Mineral Resource Management Actions

The entire WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. There are no mining claims in the WSA and it is project that no new claims would be filed prior to designation precluding any valid existing rights at the time of designation. There are no known or suspected mineral values in large or commercially extractable deposits in the WSA. No new minerals exploration work would occur since claims could not be filed.

Energy Development Actions

The entire WSA would be withdrawn from oil and gas or geothermal leasing. There would be no exploration or development as the area is not considered to be valuable for these resources. The portion of the proposed Trans Sierra Utility Corridor within the WSA would not be available for development.

Recreation Management Actions

The entire WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. The 26 miles of vehicle ways would be closed to use of recreational visitors. ORV visitor use would be expected to decrease by 3,000 visitor days to 500 visitor days per year following the restriction of vehicle access.

Wild Horse and Burro Management Actions

Wild horse and burro management actions for this alternative would be the same as described for the Proposed Action.

Predator Control Actions

Predator control actions for this alternative would be the same as described for the Proposed Action.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

23,230 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
24,085 Acres Non-wilderness

The Partial Wilderness Alternative would designate 23,230 acres as wilderness. This portion of the WSA would be managed to preserve wilderness values and permit existing livestock grazing operations to continue. The remainder of the WSA would not be designated as wilderness. Management of the non-wilderness portion would be under the guidance of the Cal Neva land use plan which emphasize the livestock, wildlife, wild horses, cultural resource and dispersed motorized recreation (see Map 2-8).

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

Livestock grazing and range management actions for this alternative would be the same as described for the Proposed Action.

Mineral Resource Management Actions

The 23,230 acres recommended for wilderness would be withdrawn from mineral entry. At the time of designation, all mineral exploration and development would end.

The 24,085 acres not designated as wilderness would be open to mineral entry. No mining claims have been recorded within the WSA and there is no history of past or current mineral development. Based on current activity and past history, potential for future development is low. No mineral exploration or development activities are anticipated within planning projections for the next 15 to 20-years.

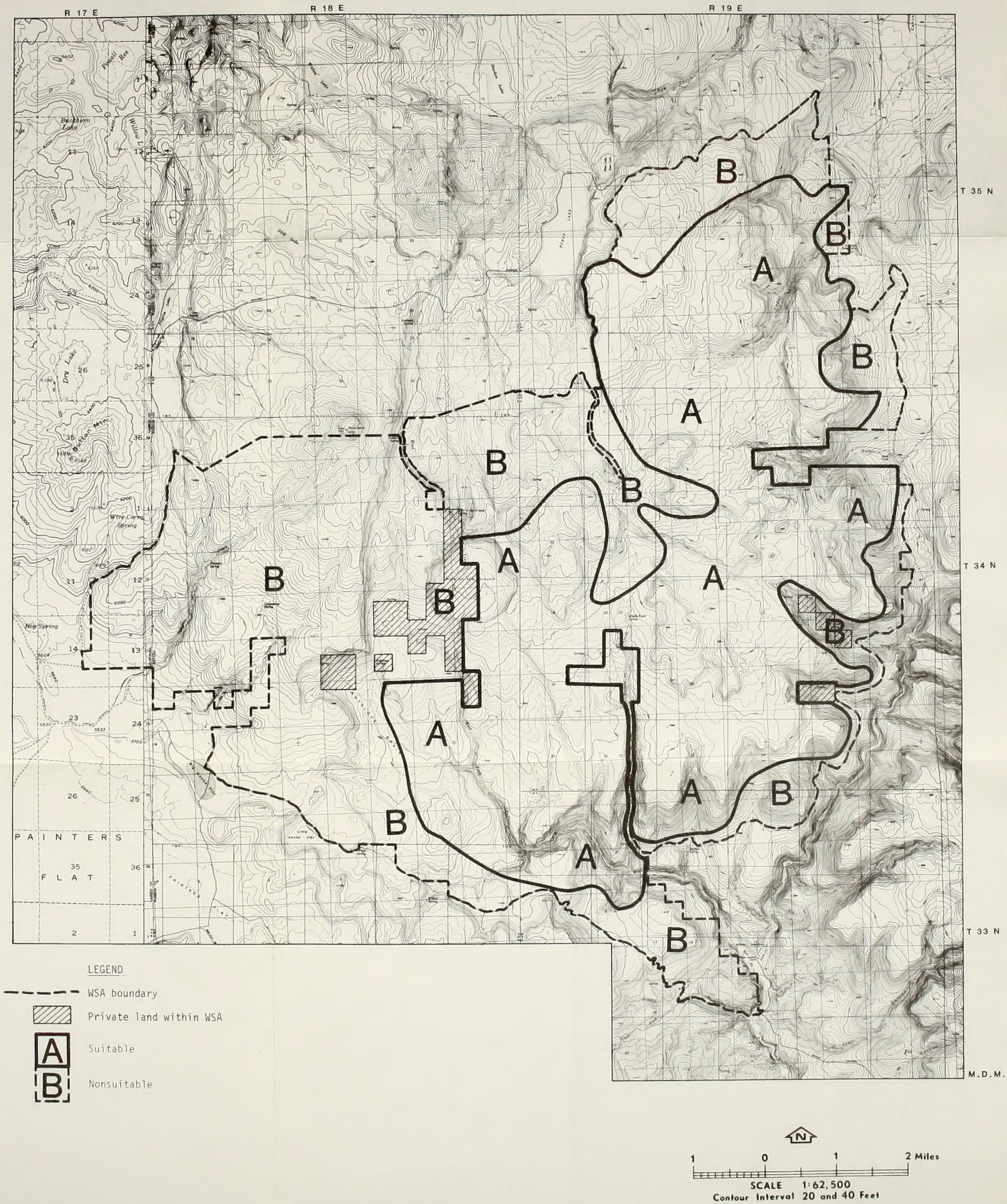
Energy Development Actions

The 23,230 acres designated wilderness would be withdrawn from oil and gas, and geothermal leasing. The remaining 24,085 acres would be available for oil and gas, and geothermal exploration and development. Based upon geology and the lack of a past history of exploration, it would be anticipated that no new leasing, exploration and development would occur.

The proposed utility corridor is located in the non-suitable portion of this alternative. The alignment is not considered a high priority by utility industry planners. If the corridor were to be developed, the power line alignment would most likely occur outside the WSA.

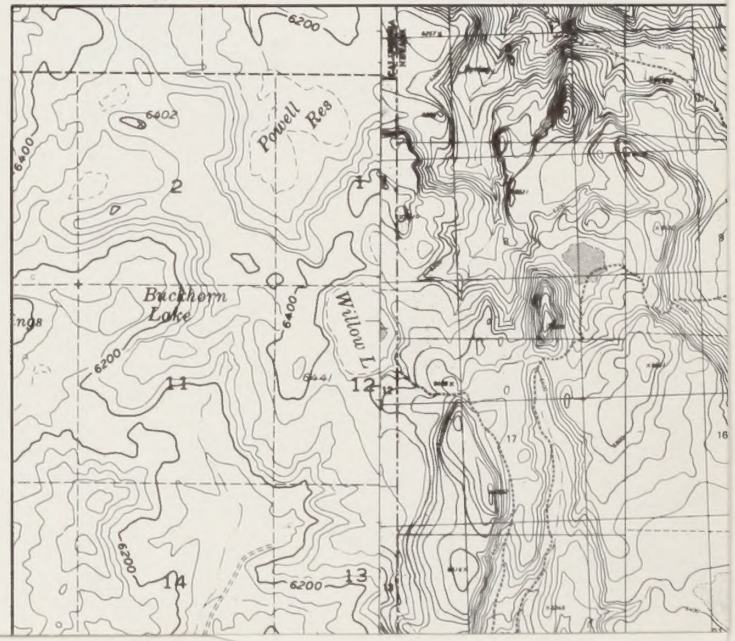
Recreation Management Actions

Recreational ORV use would be eliminated on 23,230 acres. Five of the twenty-six miles of vehicle ways would be closed. There are no visitor



CA-020-619
BUFFALO HILLS
Partial Wilderness Alternative
MAP 2-8

R 17 E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Powell Res
2
Buckhorn Lake
6400
Willow L
11
12
6200
14
13
6200

TABLE 5
COMPARISON OF IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES FOR THE BUFFALO HILLS WSA

Issue-Related Resources	Proposed Action (No Wilderness/No Action)	All Wilderness Alternative	Partial Wilderness Alternative
Wilderness Values	Naturalness reduced on 5 acres due to range improvements. Overall naturalness improved be implementation of grazing system. Solitude and primitive recreation would remain as presently exists as vehicle use is expected to remain at present levels of 3,500 visitor days.	Naturalness reduced on 5 acres due to range improvements. Overall naturalness improved by implementation of grazing system. Solitude and primitive recreation would improve with the closure of 26 miles of way and elimination of 3,500 visitor days of vehicle use. Same illegal trespass by vehicle would occur due to lack of natural barriers on the boundaries.	Naturalness reduced on 3 acres in wilderness portion and 2 acres in non-wilderness portion due to range improvement. Overall naturalness improved by implementation of grazing system in both areas. Solitude and primitive recreation would be slightly improved by closing of 5 miles of way in the designated wilderness portion. In the non-wilderness portion solitude and pritive recreation would remain as presently exists.
Recreational ORV Use	No impact as 26 miles of way would remain open and 3,500 visitor days of use is expected to remain stable in the long term.	Loss of 3,500 visitor days of vehicle use with closure of 26 miles of ways.	Loss of 500 visitor days of vehicle use with closure of 5 miles of ways.

facilities planned for development. ORV visitor use would have a decrease from the existing 3,500 visitor days to 3,000 visitor days.

Wild Horse and Burro Management Actions

Wild horse and burro management actions for this alternative would be the same as described for the Proposed Action

Predator Control Actions

Predator control actions for this alternative would be the same as described for the Proposed Action.

TWIN PEAKS
(CA-020-619A)

PROPOSED ACTION (PARTIAL WILDERNESS)

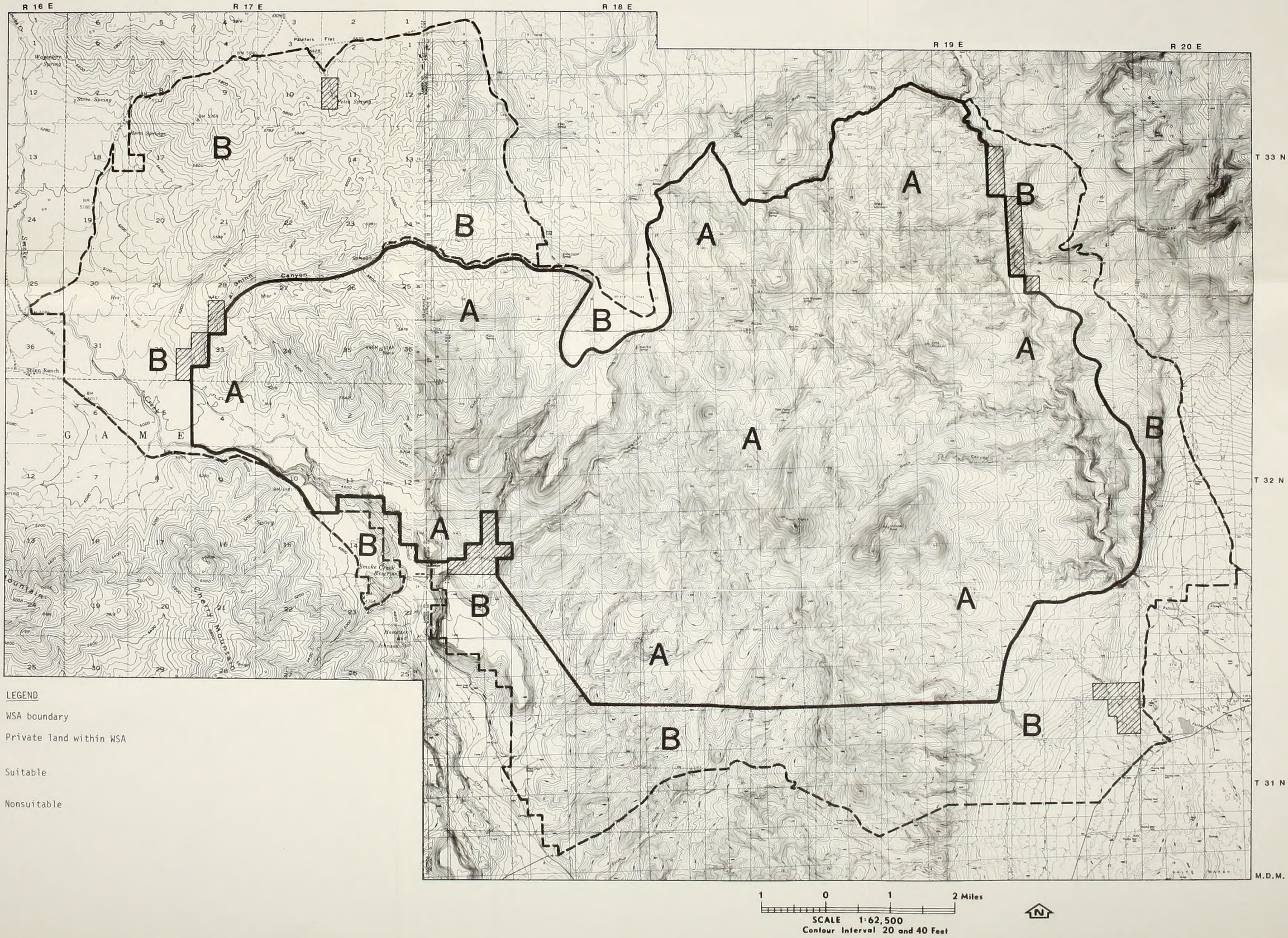
54,970 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
36,435 Acres Non-wilderness

Under the Proposed Action, 54,970 acres would be designated as wilderness. This portion of the WSA would be managed to preserve wilderness values and permit existing livestock grazing operations to continue. The remainder of the WSA would not be designated as wilderness. Management of the non-wilderness portion would be under the guidance of the Cal Neva land use plan which emphasize livestock, wildlife and wild horse uses of the area (see Map 2-9).

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

The WSA would continue to provide a total of 4,060 AUMs for cattle and sheep in one allotment. Approximately 2,400 of the AUMs would be in the part designated as wilderness in this alternative. Proposed projects to support existing levels of livestock use include four small reservoirs which would result in a total surface disturbance of four acres. For locations see Chapter 3 Range Map 3-17. Three of the four livestock reservoirs would be in the non-wilderness part of the WSA. There would be vehicle trips for a two to four day period for construction of the reservoirs.

Maintenance of existing and proposed projects would continue. Existing range improvement projects located in the area designated as wilderness include 1 stock reservoir, 18 developed springs and 8 miles of fence. Existing range improvement projects located in the non-wilderness part of this alternative include 4 stock reservoirs, 6 developed springs, 9 miles of fence and 1 well with windmill. Fence and spring maintenance is usually done on foot or on horseback. However, if major maintenance is required, a pickup truck would be required to transport materials. Reservoir maintenance generally requires use of track mounted heavy equipment. Fences



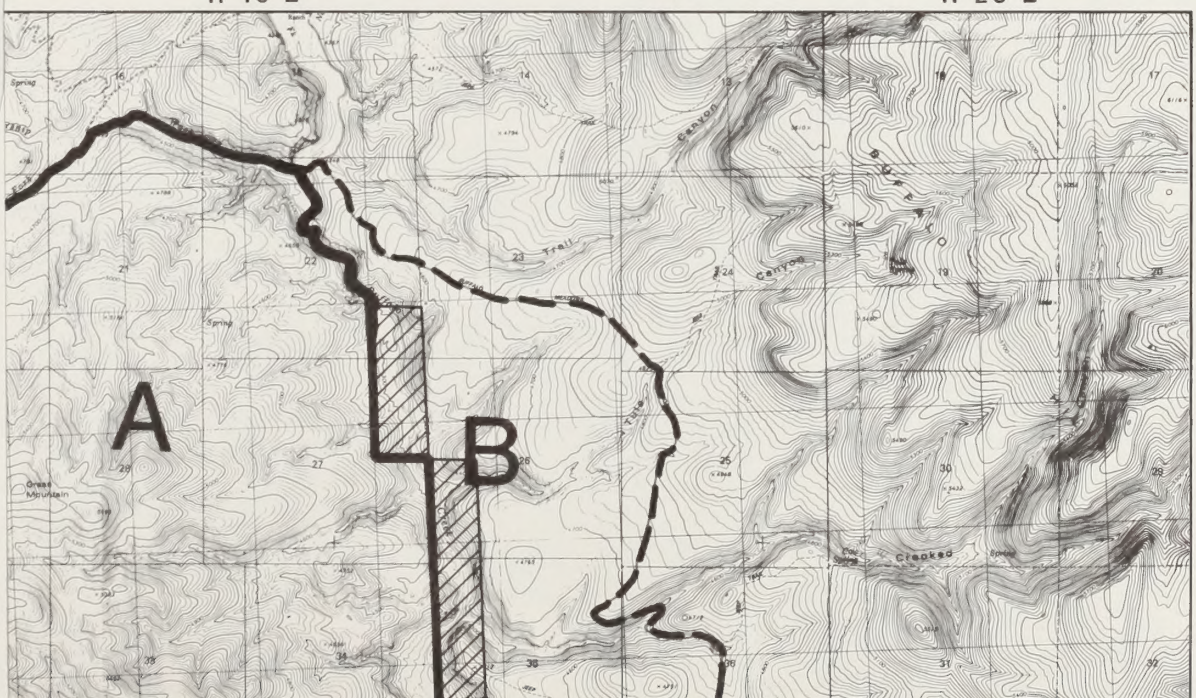
CA-020-619A
TWIN PEAKS

Proposed Action/Partial Wilderness
MAP 2-9

R 19 E

R 20 E

T 33 N



and springs require annual inspection for minor maintenance and require major maintenance at 5 to 10-year intervals. Reservoirs require maintenance at approximately 15-year intervals. Continuing maintenance would amount to 6 trips annually, with 10 to 15 additional trips on a 5-year interval for spring and reservoir maintenance. The new reservoirs would not significantly change this schedule.

The herding of two bands of sheep would require the support of one or two tent camps which would be moved by truck on four day intervals during spring and late fall.

Mineral Resource Development Actions

A portion of the WSA including 54,970 acres would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. There are no known or suspected mineral values of large or commercially extractable deposits in this portion of the WSA. At the time of designation all mineral exploration and development activities would end.

The 36,435 acres not designated wilderness would remain open to mineral entry. There is no mineral development occurring, nor is there a past history of development in the WSA. Although no mining claims have been recorded in the WSA, the Barringer Report identified possible anomalous areas for barium, copper, nickel, mercury, tungsten and zinc. The data provided does not identify economic significance, nor imply mineable deposits. In view of past activity, the area has low potential for future development, including saleable minerals. No mining activity is projected within planning estimates of 15 to 20-years.

Energy Development Actions

The 54,970 acres of the WSA designated as wilderness would be closed to mineral leasing for oil and gas, and geothermal resource development.

On the 36,435 acres not designated as wilderness, the lands would be available for leasing. The potential for oil and gas is unknown. The WSA is not considered prospectively valuable for geothermal or other leasable minerals. No energy development is projected within planning estimates of 15 to 20-years.

Two potential utility corridors pass through the WSA. The high priority alignment, located on an east-west axis along the southern boundary is in the unsuitable portion and could be utilized. Seven miles of powerline would be built along the southern boundary of the WSA utilizing an access road previously developed for an underground telephone line. A second lower priority alignment is located on a northwest-southeast axis through the northeast end of the WSA. It is in the suitable area and would not be built on.

Recreation Management Actions

The designated wilderness portion of the WSA, 54,970 acres, would be closed to recreational ORV use. This would result in the closure of approximately 8 miles of the 38 total miles of vehicle ways. Recreational

vehicle visitor use is expected to decrease from approximately 7,200 visitor use days to 6,200 visitor use days annually over the long term. There are no recreation user facilities planned within the WSA.

Wild Horse and Burro Management Actions

Wild horses and burros will be gathered from the WSA at approximately 3 to 4-year intervals in order to maintain population levels with management guidelines. Horses will be herded from the WSA to outside trap sites with a helicopter during the summer/fall period. Activity within the WSA would be limited to a few days each time the herds were gathered.

Predator Control Actions

The northern third of the WSA would continue to receive annual predator control activities by the appropriate Federal agency. Control activities for the coyotes, would occur in the spring/summer and again in the late fall each year. Activities would include aerial gunning flights for two to three days during the spring and fall. Each flight would be over the WSA for part of a day. Each flight would be over the WSA for part of a day. During the spring leg traps would be set and checked at two-day intervals.

ALL WILDERNESS

91,405 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
0 Acres Non-wilderness

All 91,405 acres in the Twin Peaks WSA would be designated as wilderness. Under this alternative, recreational ORV use would be eliminated. Livestock grazing would continue as an authorized non-conforming use. Discretionary management actions would be permitted only to preserve wilderness values.

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

Livestock grazing and range management actions for this alternative would be the same as described for the Proposed Action. All AUMs and projects to support existing level of use would be located within the designated wilderness.

Mineral Resource Development Actions

The entire WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. There is no mineral development occurring, nor is there a past history of development in the WSA. There are no mining claims in the WSA. In view of past activity and the lack of known mineral values, the area is considered to have low potential for future development, including saleable minerals. No mining activity is projected within planning estimates of 15 to 20-years.

Energy Development Actions

The entire WSA would be withdrawn from oil and gas or geothermal leasing. The potential for oil and gas in unknown. The WSA is not considered prospectively valuable for geothermal or other leasable minerals. No energy development is anticipated within planning projection of 15 to 20-years.

The two potential utility corridors shown on Map 3-16 would not be utilized within the WSA. No powerlines would be constructed within the WSA. However, development could occur within the southern corridor if the powerline were located outside the WSA. Alternative routes also currently under study by utility planners would be available for use.

Recreation Management Actions

The entire WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. The thirty-eight miles of vehicle ways would be closed to use by recreational visitors. Visitor use would be expected to decrease by 6,000 visitor days to 1,200 visitor days annually. No visitor facilities are to be developed.

Wild Horse and Burro Management Actions

Wild horse and burro management actions for the alternative would be the same as described for the Proposed Action..

Predator Control Actions

Predator control actions for this alternative would be the same as described for the Proposed Action.

NO WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

0 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
91,405 Acres Non-wilderness

None of the 91,405 acres in the Twin Peaks WSA would be designated as wilderness. The area would be managed under the guidance of BLM's Cal Neva land use plan that emphasize the livestock, wildlife, recreation, and wild horses and burros resources of the area.

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

Livestock grazing and range actions for this alternative would be the same as described for the Proposed Action.

Predator Control Actions

Predator control actions for this alternative would be the same as described for the Proposed Action.

TABLE 6

COMPARISON OF IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES FOR THE TWIN PEAKS WSA

Issue-Related Resources	Proposed Action (Partial Wilderness)	All Wilderness Alternative	No-Wilderness/No Action Alternative
Wilderness Values	Naturalness reduced on 1 acre in the wilderness portion and 2 acres in the non-wilderness portion due to construction of 4 livestock reservoirs. Naturalness lost on 7 miles of powerline constructed in the proposed utility corridor affecting 8,500 acres. Solitude and primitive recreation would be improved in wilderness area by closure of 8 miles of ways and reduction of 1,000 visitor days of vehicle use.	Naturalness reduced on 3 acres due to construction of 4 livestock reservoirs. Solitude and primitive recreation improved due to closure of 38 miles of ways and 7,200 visitor days of vehicle use. Some illegal trespass by vehicles would occur due to a lack of natural barriers on the boundaries.	Naturalness reduced on 3 acres due to construction of 4 livestock reservoirs. Naturalness lost on 7 miles of high priority powerline affecting 8,500 acres. Is not likely low priority powerline would ever be built. Solitude and primitive recreation is not expacted to change as existing levels of vehicle use would remain stable for the foreseeable future.
Recreational ORV Use	In the wilderness portion closure of 8 miles of ways would reduce visitor use by 1,000 visitor days. In the non-wilderness portion 30 miles of ways would be used by existing levels of 6,200 visitor days. That level expected to remain constant in the foreseeable future.	Loss of 7,200 visitor days of vehicle use with closure of 38 miles of ways.	No impact. Existing vehicle use is expected to remain at present levels of 7,200 visitor days.
Trans Sierra Utility Corridor	The higher priority proposed utility corridor is in the non-wilderness portion and 7 miles of transmission line in the WSA could be constructed. A lower priority utility corridor in the wilderness portion could not be developed. Since the higher priority corridor could be developed there there would be no significant impact.	There would be no development of the 2 proposed utility corridors in the WSA. The higher priority line would have to fine an alternative, more expensive route. The lower priority line would not likely be built.	No impact as either the high or the low priority proposed utility corridors could be built on. It is expacted only the higher priority line would be built.

Alternatives

Mineral Resource Development Actions

The entire WSA would remain open for mineral entry under the appropriate laws and regulations. There is no mineral development occurring, nor is there a past history of development in the WSA. There are no mining claims within the WSA. In view of past activity and the lack of known mineral values, the area is considered to have low potential for future development, including saleable minerals. Therefore, no mining activities are anticipated within planning estimates of 15 to 20-years.

Energy Development Actions

The entire WSA would be opened to mineral leasing for oil and gas or geothermal. It is not anticipated that any leases would be issued or any exploration holes would be drilled due to the low potential for these minerals.

Both utility corridors would be available to develop high voltage powerlines. The corridor along the southern boundary of the WSA would most likely be the one developed as it is a higher priority route. Seven miles of high voltage powerline would be built using existing access along the southern boundary.

Recreation Management Actions

None of the WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. As a result, none of the 35 miles of ways would be closed to vehicle use. Recreational vehicle visitor use is expected to stay at approximately 7,200 visitor days per year.

Wild Horse and Burro Management Actions

Wild horse and burro management actions for this alternative would be the same as described for the Proposed Action.

WALL CANYON
(CA-020-805)

PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS)

0 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
45,790 Acres Non-wilderness

The Proposed Action for the Wall Canyon WSA would not designate any of the 45,790 acres as wilderness. The area would be managed under the guidance of the BLM's Tuledad/Home Camp Planning Units existing land use plans that emphasize livestock, wildlife and recreation uses of the area.

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

The WSA would continue to provide a total of 4,050 AUMs of forage for cattle in three allotments, with 625 AUMs in the Duck Lake Allotment, 2,175 AUMs in the Home Camp Allotment, and 1,250 AUMs in the Wall Canyon Allotment. Proposed projects to support existing levels of livestock use are limited to two reservoirs (one in Duck Lake, one in Wall Canyon) in the center of the WSA. Construction of the reservoirs would require 6 vehicle trips.

Maintenance of the existing 12 reservoirs, 9 developed springs and 24 miles of fence would continue to require 5 vehicle trips per year with an additional 20 vehicle trips every 5-years for reservoir maintenance. The 2 proposed reservoirs would require an additional 2 vehicle trips every 5-years. Fence and spring maintenance would be done on foot or on horse back. However, if major maintenance is required, a pickup truck would be used to transport materials. Reservoir maintenance would require use of track mounted heavy equipment. Fences and springs require annual inspection for minor maintenance and would require major maintenance at 5 to 10-year intervals. Reservoirs would require maintenance at approximately 15-year intervals.

Mineral Resource Development Actions

The entire WSA would remain open for mineral entry under the appropriate laws and regulations. Over the next 15 to 20-years it is projected that 20 claims for precious metals would be filed in the northwestern portion of the WSA. Exploration work on the claims would result in two miles of bladed road and drilling of 10 exploration holes. Total surface disturbance would be approximately 3 acres. Northwestern Nevada is dominated by non-mineral volcanic flows. Virtually all known mineral deposits occur where the volcanic flows do not cover the concealed geologic formations. Due to the difficulties of working with only fragmented knowledge of the underlying geology exploration activities have been uncommon. Exploration that does occur has focused on the testing of geologic models regarding the deposition of precious metals by prehistoric geothermal activity. The northwestern portion of the WSA has limited areas of exposure of the basement geology which has attracted the interest of exploration geologists. However, interest in exploration to search for concealed minerals and the testing of geological models would not be reasonably expected to lead to active development of any mineral resource. In the very unlikely event that commercial quantities of minerals were discovered, development of an open pit mine would result in a surface disturbance of approximately 300 acres. The disturbance would result from the pit, rock dumps, leach pads, ponds, roads and the mill site. Mine operation would last 3 to 5-years after which the site would be stabilized but not reclaimed to original conditions.

Energy Development Actions

The entire WSA would be opened to leasing for oil and gas or geothermal. It is not anticipated that any leases would be issued or any exploration holes would be drilled, since the WSA is considered to have no potential for oil and gas or geothermal resources.

Alternatives

Recreation Management Actions

The entire 45,790 acres including 16 miles of vehicle ways within the WSA would remain open for ORV recreational use. There are no recreation user facilities planned within the WSA. Visitor use would be expected to increase by 100 visitor use days to 800 visitor use days per year as hunting quotas increase over the next 15 to 20-years. Virtually all of the visitor use would be made with ORVs.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

45,790 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
0 Acres Non-wilderness

All 45,790 acres in the Wall Canyon WSA would be designated as wilderness. Under this alternative, recreational ORV use would be eliminated. Livestock grazing would continue as an authorized non-conforming use. Discretionary management actions would be permitted only to preserve wilderness values.

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

Livestock grazing and range management actions for this alternative would be the same as described for the Proposed Action.

Mineral Resource Development Actions

The entire WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Based on a low potential for minerals and the lack of a discovery it is anticipated that the claims at the north-western edge of the WSA would become invalid and no future mineral exploration activities would occur.

Energy Development Actions

The entire WSA would be withdrawn from oil and gas or geothermal leasing.

Recreation Management Actions

The entire WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. The sixteen miles of vehicle ways would be closed to use of recreational visitors. Non-motorized visitor use would be expected to increase to 350 visitor days per year following the restriction of vehicle access. No recreation user facilities are planned within the WSA.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

26,520 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
19,270 Acres Non-wilderness

The Partial Wilderness Alternative would designate 26,520 acres as wilderness. This portion of the WSA would be managed to preserve wilderness values and permit existing livestock grazing operations to continue. The

remainder of the WSA would not be designated as wilderness. Management of the non-wilderness portion would be under the guidance of the Tuledad/Home Camp Planning Units land use plans which emphasize livestock and wildlife use of the area (see Map 2-10).

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

The WSA would continue to provide a total of 4,050 AUMs for cattle in three allotments. Approximately 1,200 AUMs would be used in the designated portion of the WSA. The remaining 2,850 AUMs would be harvested in the non-wilderness portion. Proposed projects to support existing levels of livestock use are limited to two reservoirs (one in Duck Lake, one in Wall Canyon) in the designated portion. Surface disturbance would be approximately 1 acre per site. Construction of the reservoirs would require 6 vehicle trips.

Maintenance of projects would continue. Fence and spring maintenance would be done on foot or on horse back. However, if major maintenance is required, a pickup truck would be used to transport materials. Reservoir maintenance would require use of track mounted heavy equipment. Fences and springs require annual inspection for minor maintenance and would require major maintenance at 5 to 10-year intervals. Reservoirs would require maintenance at approximately 15-year intervals. Projects to be maintained in the designated portion include 6 reservoirs, 5 spring developments and 22 miles of fencing. The remainder of the projects would be maintained in the non-wilderness portion. Projects in both portions of the WSA are widely scattered. Maintenance of the existing livestock facilities require 5 vehicle trips annually, plus 20 vehicle trips every 5-years. This includes one vehicle trip in the designated portion of the WSA annually, as well as 4 vehicle trips every 5-years for major maintenance activities. Maintenance of the 2 proposed livestock reservoirs would require one additional vehicle trip every 5-years in the designated portion of the WSA.

Mineral Resource Development Actions

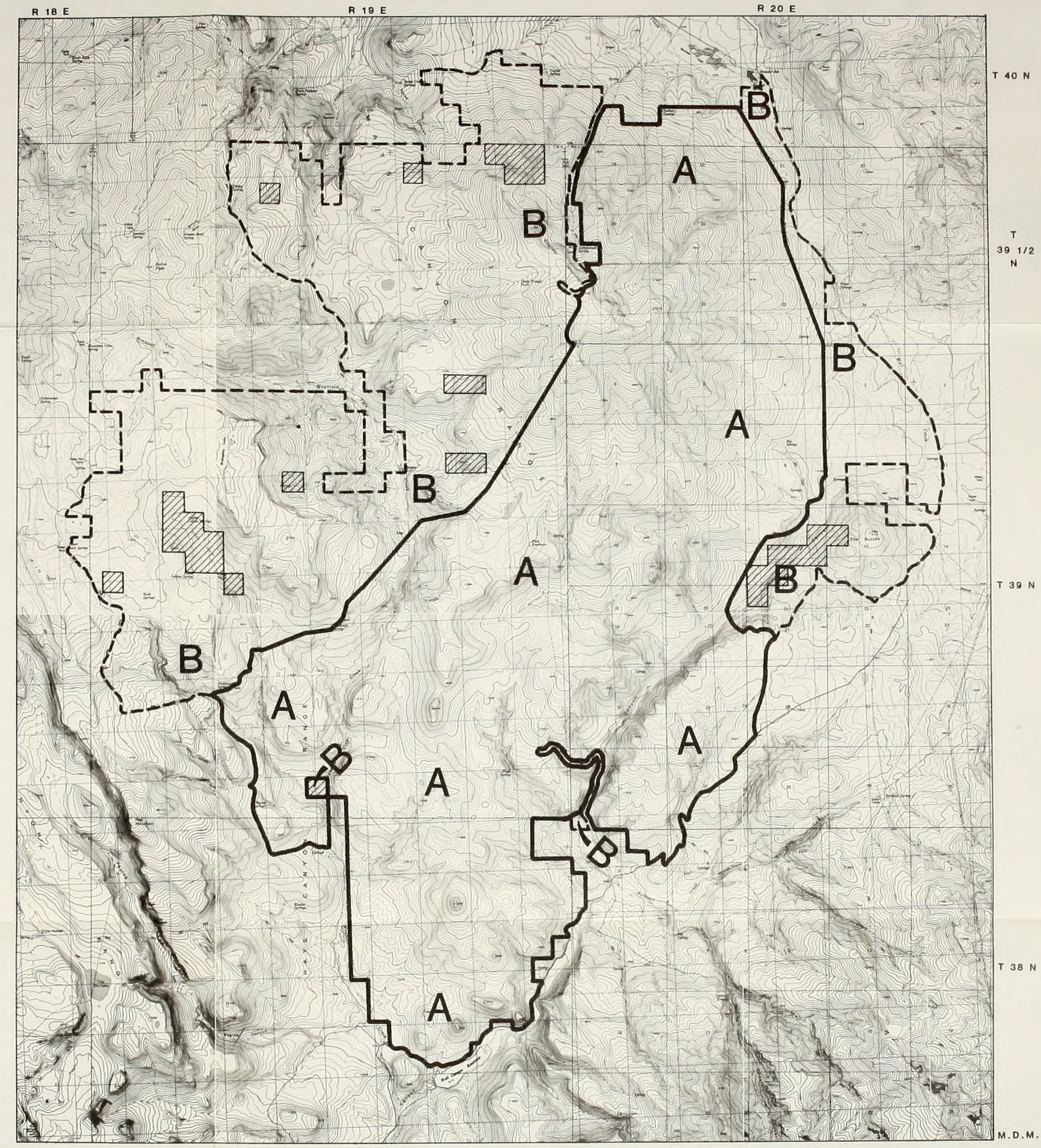
A portion of the WSA encompassing 26,520 acres would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. There would be no future minerals exploration.

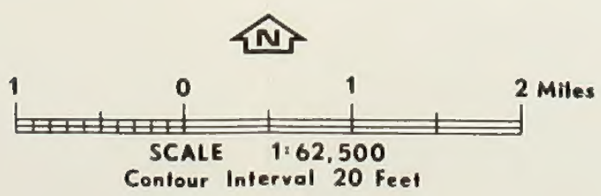
The 19,270 acres not designated as wilderness would be open to mineral entry. Over the next 15 to 20-years, activities would be the same as listed for the Proposed Action.

Energy Development Actions

Although 19,270 acres of the WSA would be available for oil and gas or geothermal leasing, it is not anticipated that any leasing or exploration would occur during the next 15 to 20-years.

The 26,520 acres designated as wilderness would remain withdrawn from leasing as discussed for the Proposed Action.





LEGEND

- WSA boundary
- Private land within WSA
- A — Suitable
- B — Nonsuitable

CA-020-805
WALL CANYON
Partial Wilderness Alternative
MAP 2-10

R 18 E

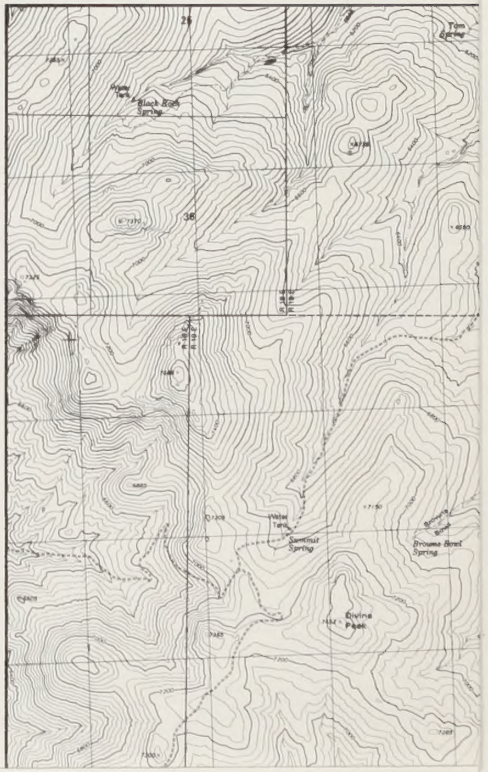

Tom Spring
Black Rock Spring
Water Tank
Sentinel Spring
Drouma Bowl Spring
Divine Peak

TABLE 7

COMPARISON OF IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES FOR THE WALL CANYON WSA

Issue-Related Resources	Proposed Action (No Wilderness/No Action)	All Wilderness Alternative	Partial Wilderness Alternative
Wilderness Values	Naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be slightly reduced over the long term as a result of an increase of 100 visitor days of ORV use. Special features would not be impacted.	Opportunities for solitude and naturalness would be slightly enhanced over existing levels. Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would not be impacted.	Naturalness and opportunities for solitude would negligibly improve on 26,520 acres. There would be no impacts to opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. On the 19,270 acres not designated as wilderness, there would be slight reductions of naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation. There would be no impacts on special features.
Mineral Resource Development	Exploration and development could occur. There would be no impacts on mineral resource development.	Exploration and development within the entire 45,790 acre WSA would be prohibited. Due to a lack of known values, there would be no significant impacts.	Exploration and development would be prohibited on 26,520 acres. Due to a lack of known values there would be no significant impacts. The remaining 19,270 acres would be available for mineral resource development.
Recreational ORV Use	Use would increase by 100 visitor days over the long term. There would be no impacts.	All 700 visitor days of recreational ORV use would be foregone. However, 350 visitor days would continue without the use of motorized vehicles.	There would be no significant impacts. All use foregone in the wilderness portion would be absorbed on would be absorbed on other lands.

Recreation Management Actions

Approximately half of the WSA 26,520 acres would be closed to recreational ORV use. This would result in the closure of 8 miles of infrequently used vehicle ways and eliminate 200 visitor days of ORV use in the designated portion of the WSA. Non-motorized visitor use on the designated portion would be expected to increase to 100 visitor days annually. On the non-designated portion of the WSA ORV visitor use would increase by 200 visitor days to 700 visitor days annually.

LITTLE HIGH ROCK CANYON
(CA-020-913 AND NV-020-008)

PROPOSED ACTION (PARTIAL WILDERNESS)

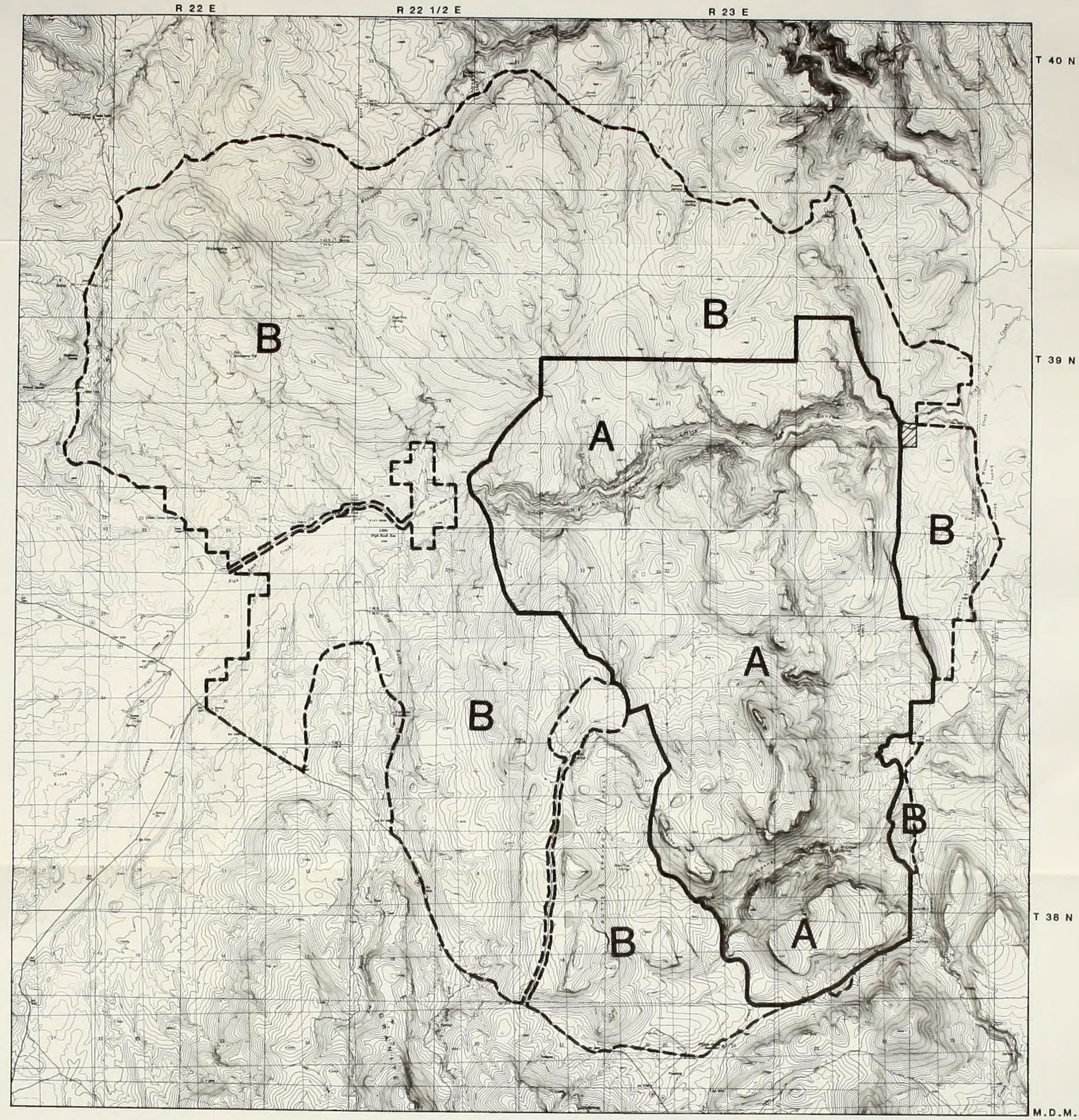
17,320 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
34,823 Acres Non-wilderness

Under the Proposed Action, 17,320 acres would be designated as wilderness. This portion of the WSA would be managed to preserve wilderness values and permit existing livestock grazing operations to continue. The remainder of the WSA would not be designated as wilderness. Management of the non-wilderness portion would be under the guidance of the Tuledad/Home Camp, Cowhead/Massacre and Sonoma/Gerlach land use plans which emphasize livestock, wildlife and wild horse uses of the area (see Map 2-11).

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

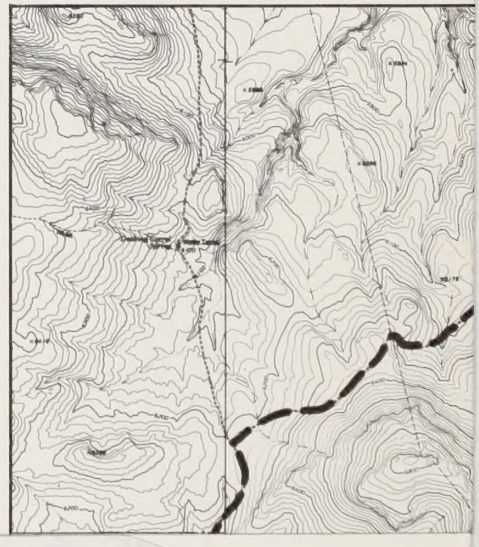
The WSA would continue to provide a total of 1,750 AUMs for cattle in four allotments and sheep in one allotment. Approximately 400 AUMs would be used in the designated portion of the WSA, with the remaining 1,350 AUMs harvested on the non-wilderness portion. Proposed projects to support existing levels of livestock use include a 700 acre seeding in the Leadville Allotment and four small reservoirs in the Massacre Mountain Allotment north of Little High Rock Canyon which would result in a total surface disturbance of five acres. The locations of these reservoirs have not been field checked. One reservoir would be developed in the designated portion of the WSA. Construction would result in 50 vehicle trips, of which 3 would occur in the designated portion.

Maintenance of the existing 20 small reservoirs, 19 miles of fence, 7 spring developments and a 2,500 acres spray area would continue. Fence and spring maintenance would be done on foot or on horseback. However, if major maintenance is required, a pickup truck would be used to transport materials. Reservoir maintenance would require use of track mounted heavy equipment. Fences and springs require annual inspection for minor maintenance and would require major maintenance at 5 to 10-year intervals. Reservoirs would require maintenance at approximately 15-year intervals. Vegetative modification projects such as seedings or sprays are re-treated with herbicides on a 15 to 20-year cycle as encroachment of sagebrush outcompetes the grass forage plants. Projects to be maintained in the designated portion include 3 reservoirs, 1 spring development and 4 miles



CA-020-913
LITTLE HIGH ROCK CANYON
Proposed Action/Partial Wilderness
MAP 2-11

R 22 E



of fencing. The other projects, including seedings, would be maintained in the non-wilderness portion. In the portion of the WSA designated wilderness, 1 vehicle trip would be required annually for maintenance activities with an additional 3 vehicle trips every 5-years for livestock reservoir maintenance. Maintenance activities in the non-designated portion of the WSA would require approximately 9 vehicle trips annually. An additional 12 vehicle trips would be required every 5-years for livestock reservoir maintenance. The new projects would require no increase in annual vehicle trips and 4 vehicle trips every 5-years for reservoir and seeding maintenance.

The requirements for herding of two bands of sheep on the northern third of the WSA would require the support of one or two tent camps which would be moved by truck on four day intervals during spring and late fall. This would continue the 10 vehicle trips annually in the non-designated portion.

Mineral Resource Development Actions

A portion of the WSA including 17,320 acres would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Since no mineral discovery has been made and based on the low favorability of accumulation of mineral resources it is not anticipated that a mineral discovery would occur prior to designation. Therefore there would be no future minerals exploration or development in this portion of the WSA.

The 34,823 acres not designated wilderness would remain open to mineral entry. Over the next 15 to 20-years, it is projected that 100 new claims would be filed adjacent to the 44 existing claims at the south end of the WSA. Several hundred holes would be drilled and eventually a mine for precious metals would be developed. Based upon nearby mining activity, it is anticipated that 300 acres of surface disturbance would occur as part of an open pit mine for precious metals including, roads, rock dumps, ponds, building sites and leach pads.

Energy Development Actions

The 17,320 acres of the WSA designated as wilderness would be closed to mineral leasing for oil and gas or geothermal resource development.

On the 34,823 acres not designated as wilderness, the lands would be available for leasing. Although this portion of the WSA contains part of one oil and gas lease and areas that are prospectively valuable for geothermal resources, it is not anticipated that there would be additional leasing or any exploration or development. The geology is generally recognized as being unfavorable for energy resources.

Recreation Management Actions

Wilderness designation would close 17,320 acres of WSA to recreational ORV use. This would result in the closure of approximately 3 miles of the total 35 miles of vehicle ways and would eliminate 200 visitor days of ORV use. Non-motorized recreation use in the designated area would slowly increase from the current 100 visitor days to 300 visitor days per year, primarily hiking use in Little High Rock Canyon.

On the remaining 34,823 acres not designated wilderness visitor use on 32 miles of vehicle ways would slowly increase from 700 visitor days to 900 visitor days. This use almost entirely involves recreational ORV use primarily for hunting access and sightseeing.

Facilities planned to enhance visitor use included a small informational sign and a pass-through fence stile at the head of Little High Rock Canyon in the non-designated portion of the WSA.

Cultural Resource Management Actions

The High Rock Cultural Resources Management Plan calls for salvage excavation of one heavily vandalized cave in Little High Rock Canyon. This would entail approximately one week of excavation on 200 square feet of cave floor. At the conclusion of the excavation all holes would be filled in to original contours. This would occur in the designated portion of the WSA.

Wildlife Management Actions

The High Rock Habitat Management Plan calls for reestablishment of woody vegetation along 5 miles of riparian zone in Little High Rock Canyon. This would involve hand planting up to 1,000 cuttings of aspens, willows and wild roses in areas where existing vegetation is sparse. The plan also calls for prescription burning of several 10 acre blocks of degraded meadow sites in the Little High Rock Canyon. On the eastern edge of the WSA there are two planned guzzlers for chukars which would result in a total surface disturbance of ¼ acre. Bighorn sheep would be reintroduced into Little High Rock Canyon and a long-term population of 100 sheep would be expected. All actions except the guzzlers would occur in the designated portion of the WSA.

Wild Horse and Burro Herd Management Actions

Wild horses and burros will be gathered from the WSA at approximately 3 to 4-year intervals in order to maintain population levels with management guidelines. Horses will be herded from the WSA to outside trap sites with a helicopter during the summer/fall period. Activity within the WSA would be limited to a few days each time the herds were gathered.

Predator Control Actions

The northern third and the eastern boundary of the WSA would continue to receive annual predator control activities by the appropriate Federal agency. Control activities for coyotes would occur in the late winter/spring and again in late fall each year. Activities would include aerial gunning flights during these periods. Most of the aerial control would occur in the non-wilderness portion.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

52,143 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
0 Acres Non-wilderness
130 Acres Private Land Designated Wilderness if Acquired
600 Acres Non-WSA Designated Wilderness

All 52,143 acres in the Little High Rock WSA would be designated as wilderness. Under this alternative, recreational ORV use would be eliminated.

Livestock grazing would continue as an authorized non-conforming use. Discretionary management actions would be permitted only to preserve wilderness values. Additionally two parcels totalling 130 acres of private land on the eastern edge of the WSA would be designated if acquired and approximately 600 acres of public land within the WSA would be designated to close a cherrystem road and remove a non-WSA island from the WSA.

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

The WSA would continue to provide 1,750 AUMs of livestock forage for cattle and sheep in four allotments. Proposed projects to support existing levels of livestock use are limited to 4 small reservoirs with a total surface disturbance of less than 5 acres. A 700 acre seeding in the Leadville Allotment would not be permitted. The reservoirs would require 12 vehicle trips for construction.

Maintenance of existing projects would continue as described in the Proposed Action, except that the Denio spray area would be re-treated at 25-year intervals with prescribed burning. A total of 10 vehicle trips would be required annually for maintenance of existing livestock facilities. Every 5-years an additional 15 trips would be necessary for existing livestock reservoir maintenance. The 4 new reservoirs would require 2 additional vehicle trips every 5-years.

The requirements for herding sheep would continue as described for the Proposed Action.

Mineral Resource Development Actions

The entire WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Since no mineral discovery has been made, and based on the low favorability of mineral resource accumulation; and a moderate potential for precious metals in the southwest portion of the WSA, it is not anticipated that mineral discovery would occur prior to designation. Therefore, the fourty-four mining claims near the southern end of the WSA would become invalid. No future mineral exploration activities would occur.

Energy Development Actions

The entire WSA would be withdrawn from oil and gas or geothermal leasing. It is anticipated that the portion of one existing oil and gas lease (80 acres) would not be developed due to unfavorable geologic structures for

oil and gas. As other leases in the area have previously been dropped, this lease would also likely be dropped.

Recreation Management Actions

The entire WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. The thirty-five miles of vehicle ways and six miles of cherrystem road would be closed eliminating 900 visitor days of recreational ORV use. Non-motorized visitor use would be expected to increase from the current 100 visitor days 500 visitor days annually. This increase would partially reflect continuation of existing use however vehicle access would be limited to the boundary roads. No visitor facilities would be developed.

Cultural Resource Management Actions

The High Rock Cultural Resources Management Plan calls for salvage excavation of one heavily vandalized cave in Little High Rock Canyon. This would entail approximately one week of excavation on 200 square feet of cave floor. At the conclusion of the excavation all holes would be filled in to original contours.

Wildlife Management Actions

Wildlife management actions for this alternative would be the same as described for the Proposed Action.

Wild Horse and Burro Management Actions

Wild horse and burro management actions for this alternative would be the same as described for the Proposed Action.

Predator Control Actions

Predator control actions for this alternative would be the same as described for the Proposed Action.

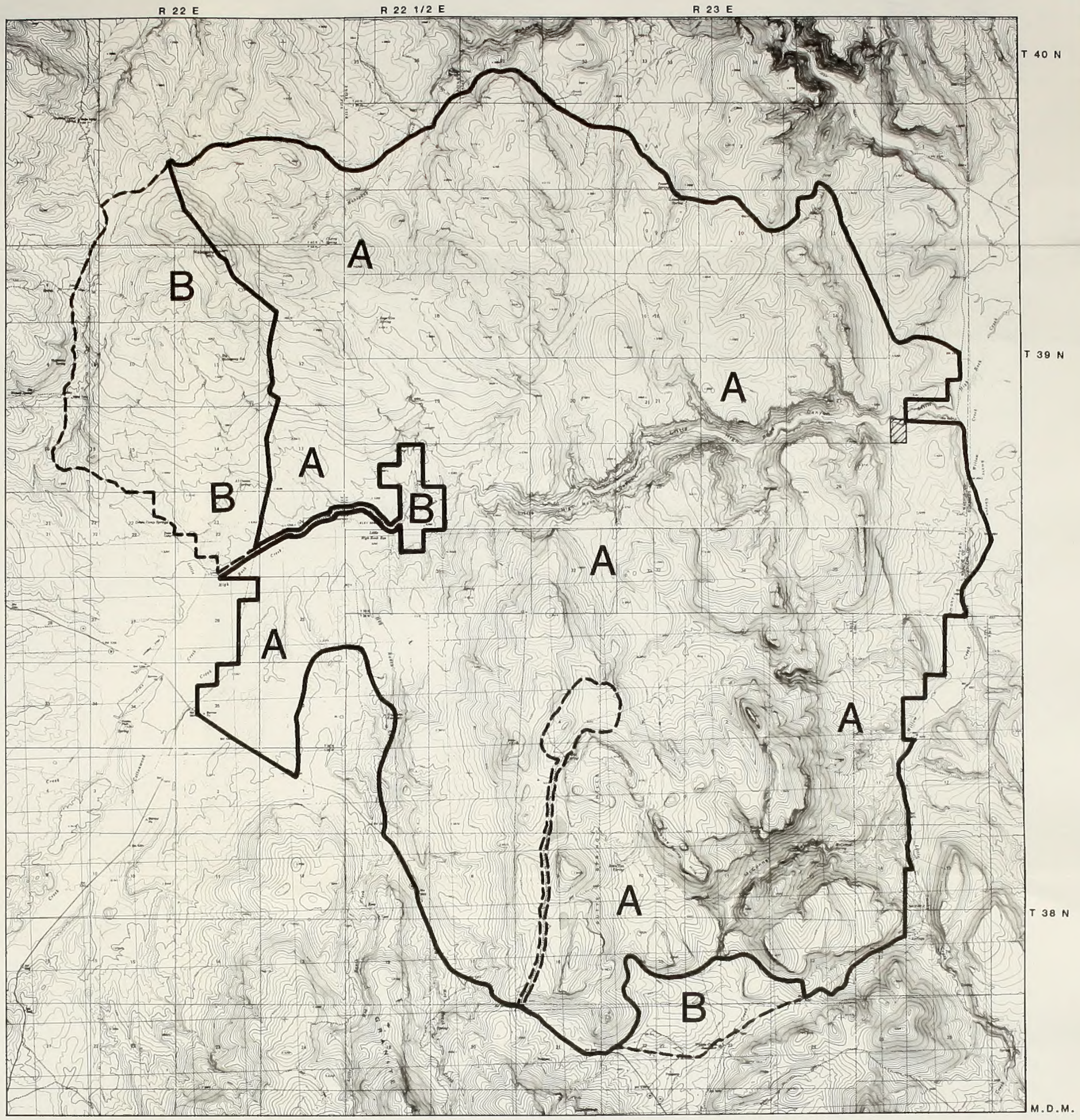
Lands and Realty Actions

Two parcels totalling 130 acres at the north of Little High Rock Canyon would be acquired under the direction of the Cowhead/Massacre MFP. Acquisition would be accomplished through the use of land exchange for lands outside the WSA.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

45,643 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
6,500 Acres Non-wilderness
130 Acres Private Land Designated Wilderness if Acquired
600 Acres Non-WSA Designated Wilderness

The Partial Wilderness Alternative would designate 45,643 acres as wilderness which includes the 8,000 acres of the WSA which are part of the High Rock ACEC. This portion of the WSA would be managed to preserve wilderness values and permit existing livestock grazing operations to continue. The remainder of the WSA would not be designated as wilderness. Management of



LEGEND

WSA boundary

Private land within WSA

A Suitable

B Nonsuitable

N

1 0 1 2 Miles

SCALE 1:62,500
Contour Interval 20 Feet

CA-020-913
LITTLE HIGH ROCK CANYON
Partial Wilderness Alternative
MAP 2-12

R 22 E

the non-wilderness portion would be managed under the guidance of the Tuledad/Home Camp, Cowhead/Massacre and Sonoma/Gerlach land use plans which emphasize livestock, wildlife, recreation, wild horses and burros and cultural resources on the area (see Map 2-12). Additionally, two parcels totalling 130 acres of private land on the eastern edge of the WSA would be designated if acquired and approximately 600 acres of public land within the WSA would be designated to close a cherrystem road and remove a non-WSA island from the WSA.

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

The WSA would continue to provide a total of 1,750 AUMs for cattle in four allotments and sheep in one allotment. Approximately 1,300 AUMs would be used in the designated portion, with the remaining 450 AUMs to be harvested in the non-wilderness portion near the southern boundary of the WSA. Proposed projects to support existing levels of livestock use include a 700 acre seeding in the non-wilderness portion and four small reservoirs in the designated portion north of Little High Rock Canyon, which would result in a total surface disturbance of five acres. The locations of these reservoirs have not been field checked. Development of these projects would involve 12 vehicle trips in the designated portion and 38 vehicle trips in the non-wilderness portion of the WSA.

Maintenance of existing and proposed projects would continue as described for the Proposed Action. All small projects except three reservoirs, one spring development and three and one-half miles of fence would be maintained in the designated portion of the WSA. Maintenance activities of vegetative treatments would occur in the non-wilderness portion of the WSA. Maintenance activities would result in 3 vehicle trips annually in the designated portion of the WSA with an additional 3 trips every 5-years for livestock reservoir maintenance.

In the non-designated portion of the WSA, 7 vehicle trips would be required for maintenance of livestock facilities with an additional 12 trips every 5-years for livestock reservoir maintenance.

The new projects would require an additional 2 vehicle trips every 5-years for maintenance of reservoirs in the designated portion and 20 additional vehicle trips every 15 to 20-years for sagebrush control on the seeding in the non-wilderness portion of the WSA.

The requirements for herding of two bands of sheep on the designated portion of the WSA would continue to require the support of one or two tent camps which would be moved by truck on 4 day intervals during spring and late fall.

Mineral Resource Development Actions

A portion of the WSA encompassing 45,643 acres would be withdrawn from mineral entry. Approximately half of the 44 existing mining claims would become invalid and no future mineral exploration activities would occur. Based on no current mineral discovery and a low favorability for mineral accumulation. A 300 acre open pit mine for precious metals would not be developed.

The 6,500 acres not designated as wilderness would be open to mineral entry. Although approximately half of the 44 mining claims within the WSA would remain in the non-designated portion, it is not expected that extensive mineral development would occur due to the low favorability for accumulation of mineral resources. Exploration work in this portion of the WSA would stop due to unfavorable economic returns.

Energy Development Actions

Approximately 6,500 acres would be available for oil and gas or geothermal leasing and exploration. Based upon geology and the lack of a past history of exploration, it is anticipated that no new leasing, exploration and development would occur.

Recreation Management Actions

Most of the WSA, 46,373 acres, would be closed to recreational ORV use, with only 6,500 acres remaining open for ORVs. This would result in closing the 25 miles of vehicle ways and eight miles of roads for use by recreational visitors. In the designated portion of the WSA, 850 visitor days of recreational ORV use would be eliminated. Non-motorized recreational use would increase from the current 100 visitor days to 450 visitor days resulting partially from a change of existing use to non-motorized activities. Visitor use in the non-wilderness portion would remain constant, but due to the nature of the area, seeding and sprayed areas, the use level would remain less than 50 visitor use days annually. Overall, visitor use throughout the WSA would be expected to decrease from approximately 1,000 use days to 500 use days annually. No visitor facilities would be developed.

Cultural Resource Management Actions

The High Rock Cultural Resources Management Plan calls for salvage excavation of one heavily vandalized cave in the designated portion. This would entail approximately one week of excavation on 200 square feet of cave floor. At the conclusion of the excavation all holes would be filled in to original contours.

Wildlife Management Actions

The High Rock Habitat Management Plan calls for reestablishment of woody vegetation along 5 miles of riparian zone in Little High Rock Canyon. This would involve hand planting up to 1,000 cuttings of aspens, willows and wild roses in areas where vegetation is sparse. The plan also calls for prescription burning of several ten-acre blocks of degraded meadow sites in the Little High Rock Canyon. On the eastern edge of the WSA there are two planned guzzlers for chukars which would result in a total surface disturbance of one quarter acre. Bighorn sheep would be reintroduced into Little High Rock Canyon and a long-term population of 100 sheep would be expected. All activities would be developed in the designated portion.

Wild Horse and Burro Management Actions

Wild horse and burro management actions for this alternative would be the same as described for the Proposed Action.

Predator Control Actions

Predator control actions for this alternative would be the same as described for the Proposed Action.

NO WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

0 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
52,143 Acres Non-wilderness

None of the 52,143 acres in the Little High Rock Canyon WSA would be designated as wilderness. The area would be managed under the guidance of BLM's Tuledad/Home Camp, Cowhead/Massacre and Sonoma/Gerlach land use plans that emphasize the livestock, wildlife, recreation, wild horse and burro and cultural resource uses of the area. The High Rock ACEC includes 8,000 acres of the WSA and is designed to protect cultural and wildlife values while preserving the primitive character of the area.

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

The WSA would continue to provide a total of 1,750 AUMs for cattle in four allotments and sheep in one allotment. Proposed projects to support existing levels of livestock use would be as described for the Proposed Action.

Maintenance of existing and proposed projects would continue as described for the Proposed Action.

The requirements for herding of two bands of sheep on the northern third of the WSA would require the support of one or two tent camps which would be moved by truck on four-day intervals during spring and late fall.

Mineral Resource Development Actions

The entire WSA would remain open for mineral entry under the appropriate laws and regulations except for approximately 8,000 acres in the Little High Rock Canyon as part of the High Rock ACEC mineral withdrawal. Over the next 15 to 20-years, it is projected that 100 new claims would be filed adjacent to the 44 existing claims at the south end of the WSA. Several hundred holes would be drilled and eventually a mine would be developed. Based upon nearby mining activity, it is anticipated that a 300 acre open pit mine including roads, rock dumps, ponds, building sites or leach pads would be developed.

Energy Development Actions

The entire WSA would be open to mineral leasing for oil and gas or geothermal. It is not anticipated that any leases would be issued or any exploration holes would be drilled due to unfavorable geologic conditions.

TABLE 8
COMPARISON OF IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES FOR THE LITTLE HIGH ROCK CANYON WSA

Issue-Related Resources	Proposed Action (Partial Wilderness)	All Wilderness Alternative	Partial Wilderness Alternative	No-Wilderness/No Action Alternative
Wilderness Values	On the 17,320 acres designated as wilderness naturalness and opportunities for solitude would be slightly enhanced. Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and the special features would not be significantly impacted. On the non-wilderness portion naturalness would be lost on approximately 6,000 acres. Opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would be slightly reduced. There would be no impact to special features.	All wilderness values would be protected. Wilderness values of naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would be slightly enhanced. Special features would not significantly change.	Wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would be slightly improved on the designated portion. On the remainder of the WSA naturalness would be lost on approximately 6,000 acres. Opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would not be measurably impacted.	Naturalness would be lost on 6,000 acres. On the remainder of the WSA, naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would be slightly reduced. Special features would not be impacted.
Livestock Grazing and Range Management	All actions proposed would occur. There would be no impacts on livestock grazing and range management activities.	There would be no impacts on two allotment. On the other two allotments available forage would be reduced due to restrictions on construction and maintenance of vegetative treatment areas. This would be a moderate impact.	All actions proposed would occur. There would be no impacts on livestock grazing and range management activities.	All actions proposed would occur. There would be no impacts on livestock grazing and range management activities.
Mineral Resource Development	The 17,370 acres designated as wilderness has no known potential. The 34,823 acre non-wilderness portion would be available for exploration and development. Development of a 300 acre precious metals mine would occur. There would be no significant impact.	Mineral resource exploration development would be foregone on the entire WSA. This would be a significant impact, since development of a 500 acre precious mine would be precluded.	Exploration and development would be foregone on 45,643 acres of the WSA. This would be a significant impact since a development of a metals mine would be precluded.	Exploration and development could occur on the entire WSA. There would be no impacts on mineral resource.
Recreational ORV Use	The 200 visitor days of recreational ORV use fore-gone would be absorbed on other public lands. There would be no significant impacts on recreational ORV use.	Approximately 900 ORV use days would be foregone annually.	Approximately 850 ORV use days would be foregone annually.	Recreational ORV use would increase by 100 visitor days to 1,000 visitor days over the long term. There would be no impacts on recreational ORV use.

Recreation Management Actions

None of the WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. As a result, none of the ways or roads would be closed to vehicle use. Visitor use is expected to slowly increase from approximately 1,000 visitor days to 1,200 visitor days annually over the long term. Of this use, recreational ORV use would increase from the current 900 visitor days to 1,000 visitor days. Facilities planned to enhance visitor use would include a pass-through fence stile and a small informational sign at the head of Little High Rock Canyon.

Cultural Resource Management Actions

The High Rock Cultural Resources Management Plan calls for salvage excavation of one heavily vandalized cave in Little High Rock Canyon. This would entail approximately one week of excavation on 200 square feet of cave floor. At the conclusion of the excavation all holes would be filled in to original contours.

Wildlife Management Actions

The High Rock Habitat Management Plan calls for reestablishment of woody vegetation along the riparian zone in Little High Rock Canyon. This would involve hand planting up to 1,000 cuttings of aspens, willows and wild roses. The plan also calls for prescription burning of several 10-acre blocks of degraded meadow sites in the Little High Rock Canyon. On the eastern edge of the WSA there are two planned guzzlers for chukars which would result in a total surface disturbance of one quarter acre. Bighorn sheep would be reintroduced into Little High Rock Canyon and a long-term population of 100 sheep would be expected.

Wild Horse and Burro Management Actions

Wild horse and burro management actions for this alternative would be the same as described for the Proposed Action.

Predator Control Actions

Predator control actions for this alternative would be the same as described for the Proposed Action.

YELLOW ROCK CANYON
(CA-020-913A)

PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS/NO ACTION)

0 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
13,050 Acres Non-wilderness

The Proposed Action for the Yellow Rock Canyon WSA would not designate any of the 13,050 acres as wilderness. The area would be managed under the

guidance of the BLM's Tuledad/Home Camp and Cowhead/Massacre planning units existing land use plans that emphasize livestock, wildlife, wild horses and cultural resource values of the Area.

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

The WSA would continue to provide a total of 350 AUMs for cattle and sheep in three allotments, with the Massacre Mountain Allotment using 200 AUMs, the Denio Allotment using 100 AUMs, and the Home Camp Allotment using 50 AUMs. Proposed projects to support existing levels of livestock use would include four small reservoirs in the Massacre Mountain Allotment. Construction of the 4 reservoirs would result in 12 vehicle trips.

Maintenance of the existing 11 reservoirs, 10 miles of fence and one spring development would continue to require 5 vehicle trips per year with an additional 20 vehicle trips every 5-years for reservoir maintenance. The 4 reservoirs that are proposed would require an additional 2 vehicle trips every 5-years. Fence and spring maintenance would normally be done on foot or on horseback. However, if major maintenance would be necessary, a pickup truck would be used to transport materials. Reservoir maintenance generally would require use of track mounted heavy equipment. Fences and springs would require annual inspection for minor maintenance and would require major maintenance at 5 to 10-year intervals. Reservoirs would require maintenance at approximately 15-year intervals.

The requirements for herding of two bands of sheep would continue to require the support of one or two tent camps which would be moved by truck at 4-day intervals during spring and late fall on the western portion of the WSA.

Mineral Resource Management Actions

The entire WSA would remain open for mineral entry under the appropriate laws and regulations. Over the next 15 to 20-years it is projected that 10 claims for precious metals would be filed in the northwestern portion of the WSA. Exploration work on the claims would result in three miles of bladed road and drilling of five exploration holes. Total surface disturbance would be approximately 3 acres. Northwestern Nevada is dominated by non-mineral volcanic flows. Virtually all known mineral deposits occur where the volcanic flows do not cover the concealed geologic formations. Due to the difficulties of working with only fragmented knowledge of the underlying geology exploration activities habe been uncommon. Exploration has focused on the testing of geologic models regarding the deposition of precious metals by prehistoric geothermal activity. The northwestern portion of the WSA has limited areas of exposure of the basement geology which has attracted the interest of exploration geologists. However, interest in exploration to search for concealed minerals and the testing of geological models would not be reasonably expected to lead to active development of any mineral resource. Since the WSA is considered to have a low favorability for accumulation of mineral resources, no mineral development is anticipated.

Energy Development Actions

The entire WSA would be open to mineral leasing for oil and gas or geothermal. However, based on unfavorable geology structure and the lack of a past history of exploration, it is not anticipated that any new leasing, exploration or development would occur.

Recreation Management Actions

There are no recreation user facilities planned within the WSA. The WSA would remain open for ORV use including 2 miles of vehicle ways. Recreational ORV use accounts for approximately 450 visitor days. Overall visitor use is expected to remain below 500 use days annually over the long term.

Wildlife Management Actions

No projects would be developed within the WSA. When bighorn sheep are reintroduced into the High Rock drainage outside the WSA, it would be expected that rams would commonly use the rimrock areas in Yellow Rock Canyon.

Wild Horse and Burro Management Actions

Wild horses and burros would be gathered from the WSA at approximately 3- to 4-year intervals in order to maintain population levels within management guidelines. Horses would be herded from the WSA to outside trap sites with a helicopter during the summer/fall period. Activity within the WSA would be limited to a few days each time the herds were gathered.

Predator Control Actions

The Massacre Mountain portion of the WSA would continue to receive annual predator control activities by the appropriate Federal agency. Control activities for coyotes would occur in the late winter/spring and again in late fall each year. Activities would include aerial control flights during these periods.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

13,050 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
0 Acres Non-wilderness

All 13,050 acres in the Yellow Rock Canyon WSA would be designated as wilderness. Under this alternative, recreational ORV use would be eliminated. Livestock grazing would continue as an authorized nonconforming use. Discretionary management actions would be permitted only to preserve wilderness values.

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

Livestock grazing and range management activities under this alternative would be the same as those described under the Proposed Action.

Mineral Resource Management Actions

The entire WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. There are no mining claims in the WSA. Since the favorability for mineral resources is low in the event any new claims are filed it is not anticipated a mineral discovery would occur. Therefore any potential claims would not be anticipated to be able to demonstrate valid existing rights. No exploration or development would occur.

Energy Development Actions

The entire WSA would be withdrawn from oil and gas or geothermal leasing.

Recreation Management Actions

The entire WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. The two miles of vehicle ways would be closed to ORV use. Recreational ORV use of 450 visitor days would be eliminated. Non-motorized recreation use would increase from 50 visitor days currently to 200 visitor days per year. No recreation facilities exist or are planned in the WSA.

Wildlife Management Actions

Wildlife management actions for this alternative would be the same as described under the Proposed Action.

Wild Horse and Burro Management Actions

Wild horse and burro management actions for this alternative would be the same as described for the Proposed Action.

Predator Control Actions

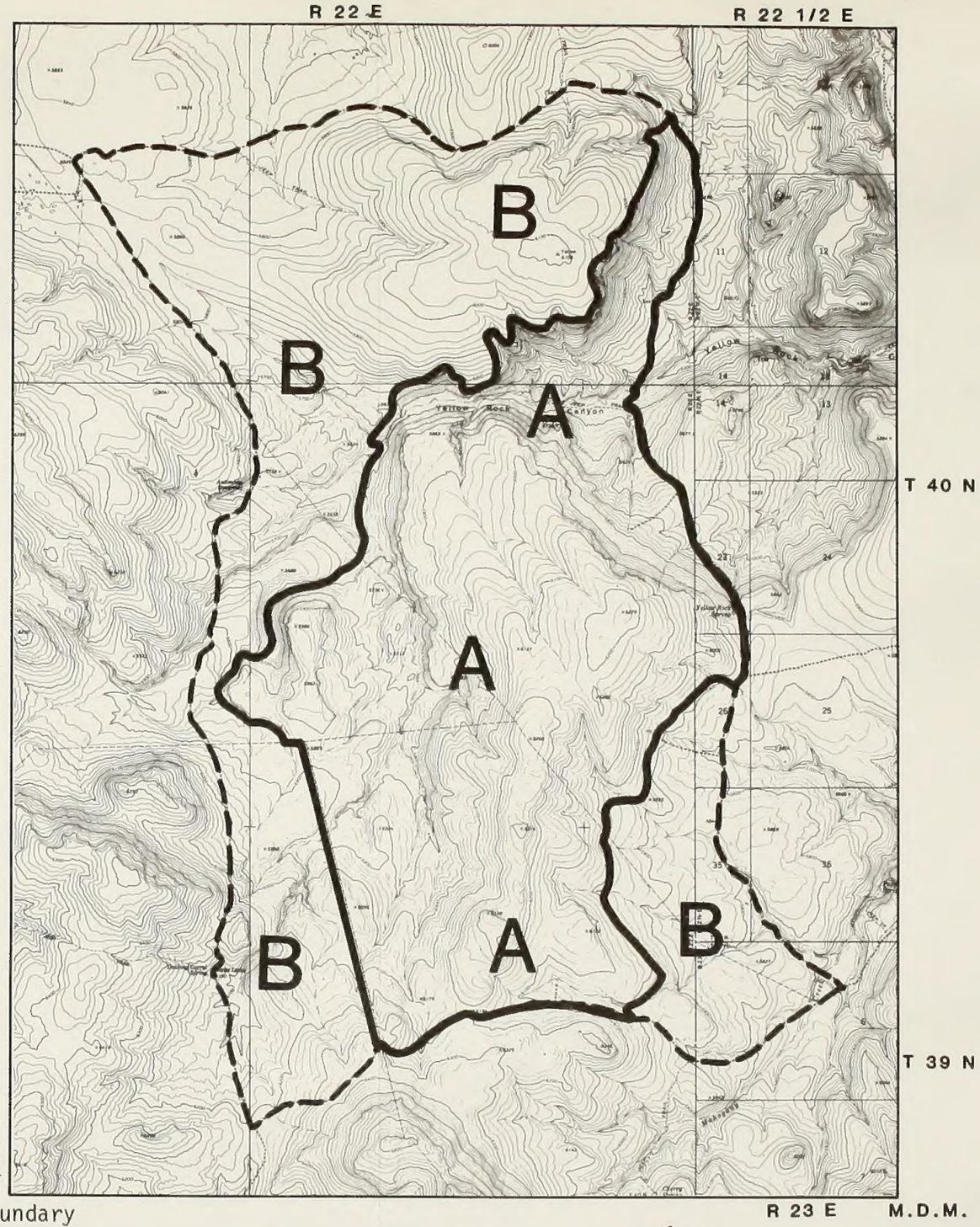
Predator control actions for this alternative would be the same as described for the Proposed Action.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

6,390 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
6,660 Acres Non-wilderness

The Partial Wilderness Alternative would designate 6,390 acres as wilderness. This portion of the WSA would be managed to preserve wilderness values and permit existing livestock grazing operations to continue. The remainder of the WSA would not be designated as wilderness. Management of the non-wilderness portion would be under the guidance of the Tuledad/Home Camp and Cowhead/Massacre land use plans which emphasize the livestock, wildlife, wild horses and cultural resource values of the area (see Map 2-13).

Alternatives



LEGEND

WSA boundary

A Suitable

B Nonsuitable

N

1 0 1 2 Miles

SCALE 1:62,500
Contour Interval 20 Feet

CA-020-913A
YELLOW ROCK CANYON
Partial Wilderness Alternative
MAP 2-13

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

The WSA would continue to provide a total of 350 AUMs for cattle and sheep in three allotments. Approximately 150 AUMs of the livestock use would occur in the designated portion, with the remainder of the 350 AUMs coming from the non-wilderness portion. Proposed projects to support existing levels of livestock use are limited to four small reservoirs in the Massacre Mountain Allotment. Only one reservoir would be developed in the designated portion. Construction would result in 12 vehicle trips of which 3 vehicle trips would occur in the designated portion.

Maintenance of existing and proposed projects would continue as described in the Proposed Action. Maintenance on four and one-half miles of fence and three reservoirs would continue to occur within the designated portion of the WSA, requiring 2 vehicle trips annually plus 5 trips every 5-years for reservoir maintenance. The remaining 3 vehicle trips per year plus 15 vehicle trips every 5-years would continue to be required to maintain facilities in the non-designated portion of the WSA. Three proposed reservoirs would require 2 additional vehicle trips every 5-years in the non-designated portion of the WSA. The remaining proposed reservoirs in the designated portion of the WSA would be maintained as part of the existing maintenance activities.

The requirements for herding of two bands of sheep would require the support of one or two tent camps which would be moved by truck at 4 day intervals during spring and late fall. All camps would be in the non-wilderness portion.

Mineral Resource Management Actions

Approximately half of the 13,050 acre WSA would be withdrawn from mineral entry. There would be no future minerals exploration activities in the designated portion of the WSA.

The 6,600 acres not designated as wilderness would be open to mineral entry. Exploration activities would be as described for the Proposed Action.

Energy Development Actions

An area of 6,660 acres would be available for oil and gas or geothermal leasing and exploration. However, based upon geology and the lack of a past history of exploration, it would be anticipated that no new leasing, exploration and development would occur.

Recreation Management Actions

Although potential recreational ORV use would be eliminated on 6,660 acres, no ways would be closed and the nature of the terrain is such that no measurable use is occurring in the designated portion of the WSA. Overall recreation use would be expected to remain relatively constant, below 500 visitor days annually including 450 visitor days of ORV use. There would be no visitor facilities planned for development.

TABLE 9

COMPARISON OF IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES FOR THE YELLOW ROCK CANYON WSA

Issue-Related Resources	Proposed Action (No Wilderness/No Action)	All Wilderness Alternative	Partial Wilderness Alternative
Wilderness Values	Naturalness, and opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be slightly reduced over the long term due to continued recreational ORV use. Special features would not be impacted.	All wilderness values within the entire 13,050 acre WSA would be protected and slightly enhanced over present values. Continued illegal ORV use would slightly degrade solitude.	On 6,390 acres the wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation, and the special features would be negligibly, improved. On the 6,600 acre non-wilderness portion, naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would negligibly decline due to continued ORV use. Special features would not be impacted.
Recreational ORV Use	Recreational ORV use would be expected to remain at current use levels of 450 visitor days. There would be no impacts on recreational ORV use.	Recreation ORV use of 450 visitor days annually would be foregone. Impacts would be negligible since the use would be absorbed on other lands.	Recreational ORV use would be expected to remain at current use levels of 450 visitor days. There would be no significant impacts.

Alternatives

Wildlife Management Actions

Wildlife management actions for this alternative would be the same as described under the Proposed Action.

Wild Horse and Burro Management Actions

Wild horse and burro management actions for this alternative would be the same as described for the Proposed Action.

Predator Control Actions

Predator control actions for this alternative would be the same as described for the Proposed Action.

HIGH ROCK CANYON
(CA-020-913B)

PROPOSED ACTION (PARTIAL WILDERNESS)

12,180 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
21,805 Acres Non-wilderness

The Proposed Action for the High Rock Canyon WSA would designate 11,980 acres as wilderness. This portion of the WSA would be managed to preserve wilderness values and permit existing livestock grazing operations to continue. This would include 200 acres of public surface/private subsurface lands. The wilderness portion of the WSA includes approximately 4,800 acres of the High Rock ACEC while 200 acres of the ACEC are within the non-designated area. The remainder of the WSA would not be designated as wilderness. Management of the non-wilderness portion would be under the guidance of the Cowhead/Massacre land use plans which emphasize the livestock, wildlife, recreation, cultural resource and wild horse values of the area. (See Map 2-14).

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

The WSA would continue to provide 1,200 AUMs of livestock forage for cattle and sheep in two allotments. Approximately 300 AUMs would be harvested in the designated portion. The remaining 900 AUMs would be used in the non-wilderness portion of the WSA. Proposed projects to support the existing levels of livestock use include five small stock ponds and two spring developments. Total surface disturbance for these projects would be approximately 6 acres. Only the spring developments would be constructed in the designated portion. The development of 5 reservoirs would require 15 vehicle trips.

Maintenance of the existing nine reservoirs, three miles of fence, one windmill and one spring development would continue. Fence and spring maintenance would usually be done on foot or on horseback. However, if major maintenance would be necessary, a pickup truck would be used to transport materials. Reservoir maintenance would require use of track

mounted heavy equipment. Fences and springs would require annual inspection for minor maintenance and require major maintenance at 5 to 10-year intervals. Reservoirs would require maintenance at approximately 15-year intervals. Two spring developments and one reservoir would require maintenance in the designated portion. Maintenance of the existing livestock facilities requires 15 vehicle trips annually plus 4 vehicle trips every 5-years including 1 vehicle trip in the designated portion of the WSA annually, as well as 1 trip every 5-years for inspection and maintenance of 1 reservoir. Maintenance of the 4 proposed livestock reservoirs would require 2 additional vehicle trips every 5-years in the non-designated portion of the WSA.

The requirements for herding of two bands of sheep on the WSA would require the support of one or two tent camps which would be moved by truck at four-day intervals during spring and late fall. All camps would be in the non-wilderness portion.

Mineral Resource Development Actions

A portion of the WSA including 12,180 acres would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Since no mineral discovery has been made and based on the low favorability for mineral resource accumulation, it is not anticipated that a mineral discovery would occur prior to designation. No future mineral exploration would occur.

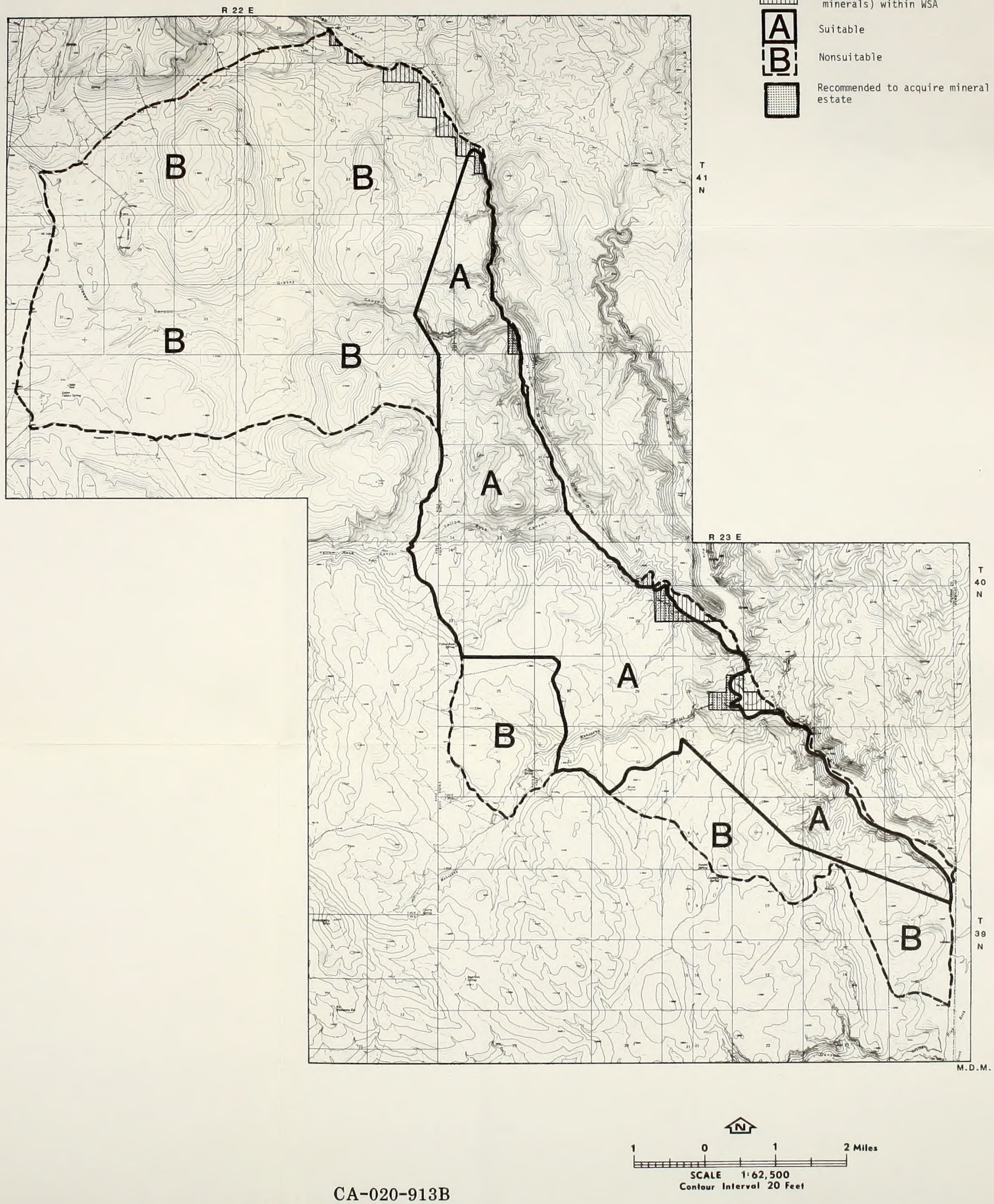
The 21,805 acres not designated wilderness would remain open to mineral entry. Over the next 15 to 20-years, it is projected that 20 new claims would be filed adjacent to the 20 existing claims at the north end of the WSA. Ten sample holes would be drilled and two miles of road developed, with a total surface disturbance of approximately five acres. Northwestern Nevada is dominated by non-mineral volcanic flows. Virtually all known mineral deposits occur where the volcanic flows do not cover the concealed geologic formations. Due to the difficulties of working with only fragmenting knowledge of the underlying geology exploration activities habe been uncommon. Exploration has focused on the testing of geologic models regarding the deposition of precious metals by prehistoric geothermal activity. The northwestern portion of the WSA has limited areas of exposure of the basement geology which has attracted the interest of exploration geologists. However, interest in exploration to search for concealed minerals and the testing of geological models would not be reasonably expected to lead to active development of any mineral resource. Exploration is not anticipated to identify commercial quantities of minerals suitable to warrant development activities based on the projected low favorability for mineral resource accumulation in the WSA and the results of past exploration.

Energy Development Actions

The 12,180 acres of the WSA designated as wilderness would be closed to mineral leasing for oil and gas or geothermal resource development.

On the 21,805 acres not designated as wilderness, the lands would be available for leasing. Due to unfavorable geology, there would be no leases, exploration or development of energy resources.

Alternatives



CA-020-913B
HIGH ROCK CANYON
Proposed Action/Partial Wilderness
MAP 2-14

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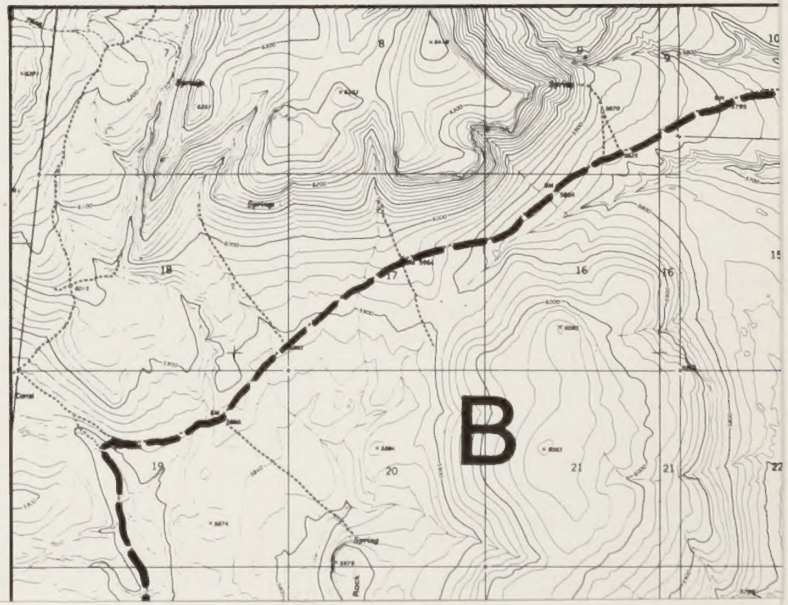


Recreation Management Actions

Wilderness designation of approximately one-third of the WSA would close 12,180 acres to recreational ORV use. This would result in the closure of approximately 2¼ miles of the 22 total miles of vehicle ways and eliminate 300 visitor days of recreational ORV use. Non-motorized visitor use would be expected to slowly increase from approximately 100 visitor use days currently to 400 visitor use days per year over the long term.

On the non-designated portion, recreational ORV use would increase by 300 visitor days to a total of 1,400 visitor days per year. Facilities planned to enhance visitor use would include rehabilitation of the Conlan Camp cabin, construction of a foot bridge across High Rock Creek at Conlan Camp, designation of one primitive camping area in High Rock Canyon and placement of informational signs at both ends of High Rock Canyon.

Cultural Resource Management Actions

The High Rock Cultural Resource Management Plan calls for test excavations of one heavily disturbed site in Mahogany Canyon in the designated portion of the WSA. This would entail approximately one week of excavation on 200 square feet. At the conclusion of the excavation all holes would be filled in to original contours. The same site would be fenced to prevent future livestock trampling. The fence would be one-half mile long.

Wildlife Management Actions

The High Rock Habitat Management Plans calls for reestablishment of woody vegetation along approximately 6 miles of riparian zone in High Rock Canyon. This would involve hand planting up to 1,000 cuttings of willow and wild roses in areas where the vegetation is sparse. The plan also calls for prescription burning of several 10 acre blocks of degraded meadow sites in the High Rock Canyon. Approximately 16 miles of fence would be constructed along the west edge of High Rock Canyon to exclude livestock from High Rock Canyon and areas east of High Rock Canyon. Bighorn sheep would be reintroduced into High Rock Canyon and a long-term populations of 200 sheep would be expected. The activities in High Rock Canyon would be in the non-wilderness portion. Approximately 12 miles of the fence would be in the designated portion. Construction would require 20 vehicle trips over a one month period.

Wild Horse and Burro Management Actions

Wild horses and burros would be gathered from the WSA at approximately 3- to 4-year intervals in order to maintain population levels within management guidelines. Horses would be herded to a trap site just inside the eastern boundary of the WSA with a helicopter during the summer/fall period. Activity within the WSA would be limited to a few days each time the herds were gathered.

Predator Control Actions

The northern third of the WSA would continue to receive annul predator control activities by the appropriate Federal agency. Control activities

for coyotes would occur in the late winter/spring and again in late fall each year. Activities would include aerial control flights during these periods.

Watershed Management Actions

Two watershed control structures would be constructed in the northwestern portion of the WSA in the non-designated area. Each structure would be 300 feet long and approximately 10 feet high. The structures would reduce peak flows into High Rock Canyon while gradually releasing water into Grassy Canyon into the summer months. Total surface disturbance would be ten acres. Each structure would require 10 vehicle trips.

Lands and Realty Actions

Approximately 685 acres of privately held mineral rights would be acquired through a mineral estate trade with the private owner. The acquired mineral estate will be withdrawn from mineral entry. The surface of the lands are owned by the Federal government.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

33,985 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
0 Acres Non-wilderness

The All Wilderness Alternative would designate the entire 33,985 acres of the High Rock Canyon WSA as wilderness. This includes 685 acres of public surface/private subsurface lands. Under this alternative recreational ORV use would be eliminated. Livestock grazing would continue as an authorized non-conforming use. Discretionary management actions would be permitted only to preserve wilderness values.

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

Livestock grazing and range management actions would be the same as described for the Proposed Action.

Mineral Resource Development Actions

The entire WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Since no mineral discovery has been made and based on the low favorability of mineral resource accumulation, it is not anticipated that a mineral discovery would occur prior to designation. All activity on the mining claims would end and the claims would become invalid. No new minerals exploration work will occur since claims could not be filed.

Energy Development Actions

The entire WSA would be permanently withdrawn from oil and gas or geothermal leasing.

Recreation Management Actions

The entire WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. The 22 miles of vehicle ways would be closed and 1,300 visitor days of recreational ORV use would be eliminated. Non-motorized visitor use would be expected to increase by approximately 800 visitor days for a total use of 1,000 visitor days per year. No visitor facilities would be developed.

Cultural Resource Management Actions

Cultural resource management activities for this alternative would be the same as described for the Proposed Action.

Wildlife Management Actions

Wildlife management activities for this alternative would be the same as described for the Proposed Action.

Wild Horse and Burro Management Actions

Wild horse and burro management activities for this alternative would be the same as the Proposed Action.

Predator Control Actions

Predator control activities for this alternative would be the same as described for the Proposed Action.

Watershed Management Actions

No actions would occur. Two control structures would not be constructed.

Lands and Realty Actions

Land and realty actions for this alternative would be the same as described under the Proposed Action.

NO WILDERNESS/NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

0 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
33,985 Acres Non-wilderness

None of the High Rock Canyon WSA would be designated as wilderness under this alternative. The area would be managed under the guidance of the BLM's Cowhead/Massacre land use plans that emphasize the livestock, wildlife, recreation, wild horses and cultural resources of the area including ACEC management of 5,000 acres in the High Rock Canyon.

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

Livestock grazing and range management actions would be the same as described for the Proposed Action.

Mineral Resource Development Actions

The entire WSA would remain open for mineral entry under the appropriate laws and regulations except for approximately 5,000 acres in High Rock Canyon which is part of the High Rock Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) mineral withdrawal.

Over the next 15 to 20-years, it is projected, that 20 new claims would be filed adjacent to the 20 existing claims at the north end of the WSA. Ten sample holes would be drilled and two miles of road developed, with a total surface disturbance of approximately five acres. Northwestern Nevada is dominated by non-mineral volcanic flows. Virtually all known mineral deposits occur where the volcanic flows do not cover the concealed geologic formations. Due to the difficulties of working with only fragmenting knowledge of the underlying geology exploration activities habe been uncommon. Exploration has focused on the testing of geologic models regarding the deposition of precious metals by prehistoric geothermal activity. The northwestern portion of the WSA has limited areas of exposure of the basement geology which has attracted the interest of exploration geologists. However, interest in exploration to search for concealed minerals and the testing of geological models would not be reasonably expected to lead to active development of any mineral resource.

Energy Development Actions

The entire WSA would be open to mineral leasing for oil and gas or geothermal. It is not anticipated that any leases would be issued or any exploration holes would be drilled.

Recreation Management Actions

Existing management of High Rock Canyon would close 5,000 acres to recreational ORV use. As a result two and one-half miles of ways would be closed to vehicle use. While 300 days of visitor use would be eliminated overall visitor use is expected to slowly increase from approximately 1,500 visitor days to 1,800 visitor days annually over the long term. Facilities planned to enhance visitor use would be the same as described for the Proposed Action.

Cultural Resource Management Actions

Cultural resource management activities for this alternative would be the same as described for the Proposed Action.

Wildlife Management Actions

Wildlife management activities for this alternative would be the same as described for the Proposed Action.

Wild Horse and Burro Management Actions

Wild horse and burro management activities for this alternative would be the same as the Proposed Action.

TABLE 10

COMPARISON OF IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES FOR THE HIGH ROCK CANYON WSA

Issue-Related Resources	Proposed Action (Partial Wilderness)	All Wilderness Alternative	No-Wilderness/No Action Alternative
Wilderness Values	On the 12,180 acres of wilderness, naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation and the special features would be negligibly improved. On the non-wilderness portion, overall naturalness and primitive and unconfined recreation would slightly decline.	All wilderness values would be protected and slightly enhanced over existing levels. Continued illegal ORV use would slightly degrade solitude.	Wilderness values of naturalness, and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would be slightly reduced by projects and ORV use. Special Features would not significantly change.
Mineral Resource Development	The 12,180 acres designated as wilderness has no known potential. The 21,805 acre non-wilderness portion has no economic potential currently identified. There would be no significant impacts on mineral resource development.	Exploration and development would be precluded on 33,985 acres. Due to a lack of economic values. There would be no significant impacts.	Exploration and development could occur within the entire WSA. There would be no impacts.
Recreational ORV Use	Designation of 12,180 acres of the WSA would eliminate 300 visitor days of ORV use and close 2½ miles of vehicle ways. However, ORV use would shift to the non-designated portion resulting in negligible impacts on ORV use.	Approximately 1,300 ORV use days would be foregone annually. There would be negligible impacts since the use would be absorbed on other lands.	Recreational ORV would would increase slightly on 200 visitor days to 1,500 visitor days over the long term. There would be no impacts on recreational ORV use.
Watershed Management	Two structures would be constructed. Riparian habitat in High Rock Canyon would be improved.	No structures would be constructed. Riparian improvement rates in High Rock Canyon would be moderately reduced.	Two structures would be constructed. Riparian habitat in High Rock Canyon would be improved.

Predator Control Actions

Predator control activities for this alternative would be the same as described for the Proposed Action.

Watershed Management Actions

Watershed management actions for this alternative would be the same as described under the Proposed Action.

Lands and Realty Actions

Lands and realty actions for the alternative would be the same as described under the Proposed Action.

EAST FORK HIGH ROCK CANYON
(CA-020-914 AND NV-020-006A)

PROPOSED ACTION (PARTIAL WILDERNESS)

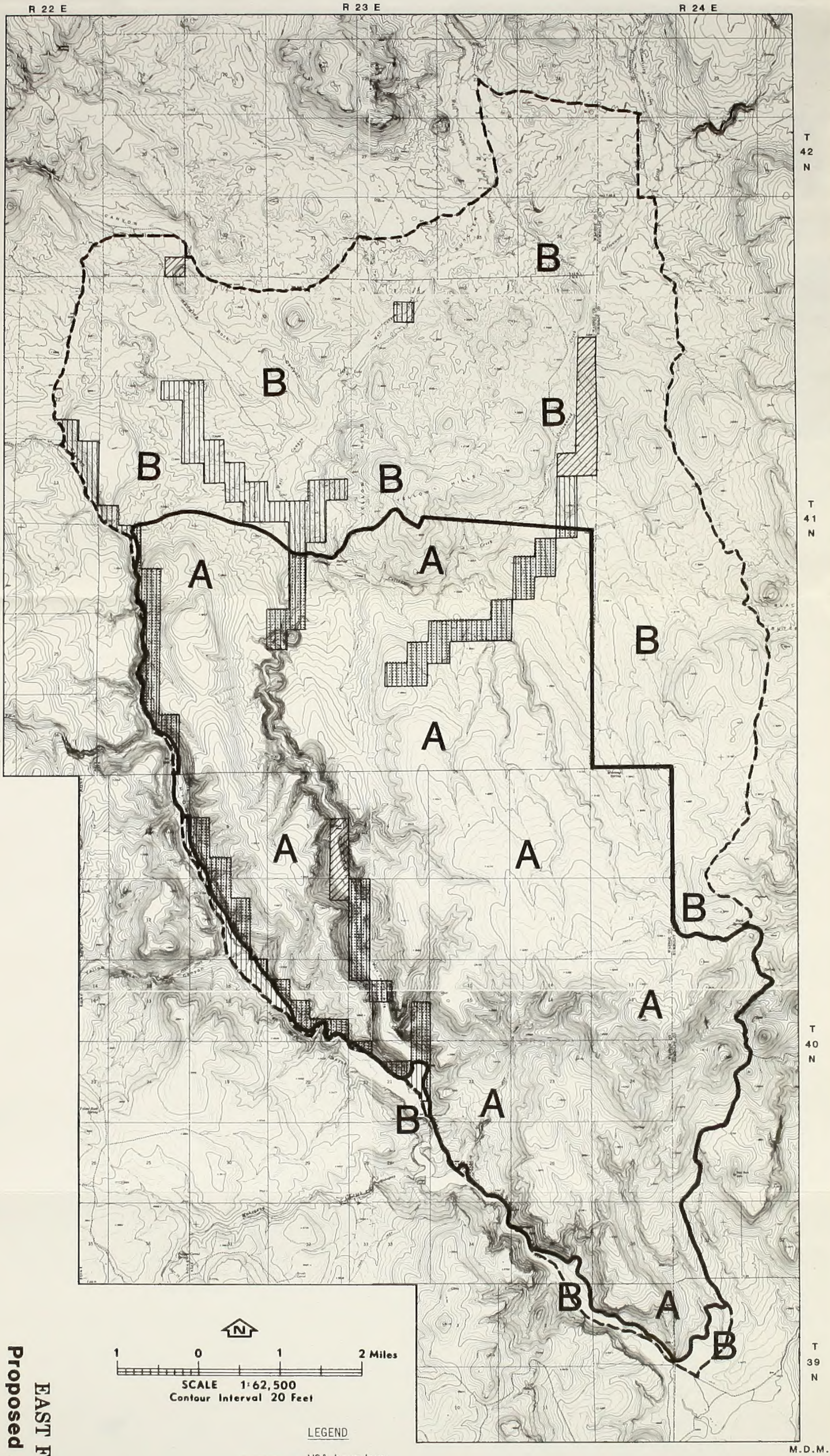
33,460 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
21,860 Acres Non-wilderness
160 Acres Private to be Designated Wilderness if Acquired

The Proposed Action for the East Fork High Rock Canyon WSA would designate 33,460 acres as wilderness. This portion of the WSA would be managed to preserve wilderness values and permit existing livestock grazing operations to continue. This would include 1,650 acres of split estate land. An additional 160 acres of private land would also be designated if acquired. The remainder of the WSA would not be designated as wilderness. Management of the non-wilderness portion would be under the guidance of the Cowhead/Massacre and Sonoma/Gerlach land use plans which emphasize the livestock, wildlife, recreation, cultural resource and wild horse and burro values of the area (see Map 2-15).

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

The WSA would continue to provide 1,300 AUMs of cattle forage in four allotments. Although the designated portion contains a large area in the Massacre Mountain Allotment no forage use is assigned to livestock due to land use plan decisions which reserves forage for wildlife and wild horses except when occasional forage use by cattle would benefit wildlife habitat. Proposed projects to support existing levels of livestock use include one reservoir in the Wall Canyon Allotment and two seedings of 2,000 acres in the Nut Mountain Allotment and 1,300 acres in the Wall Canyon Allotment. All projects would be developed in the non-wilderness portion. Projects would require approximately 60 vehicle trips.

Maintenance of the existing 17 reservoirs, 3 windmills and 22 miles of fence would continue. Fence and spring maintenance would normally be done on foot or on horseback. However, for major maintenance a pickup truck



CA-020-914

EAST FORK HIGH ROCK CANYON

Proposed Action/Partial Wilderness

MAP 2-15

would be used to transport materials. Windmill maintenance would require a pickup truck to haul tools and materials. Reservoir maintenance would require use of track mounted heavy equipment. Fences, springs and windmills would require annual inspection for minor maintenance and would require major maintenance at 5 to 10-year intervals. Reservoirs would require maintenance at approximately 15-year intervals. Seedings would require re-control in invading brush species on approximately a 20-year cycle. Maintenance activities in the designated portion would occur on six miles of fence and five small reservoirs. All other maintenance would occur in the non-wilderness portion. Maintenance of the existing livestock facilities requires 8 vehicle trips annually, plus 6 vehicle trips every 5-years including one trip every 5-years in the designated portion of the WSA for reservoir maintenance. Maintenance of the seeding would require 20 trips every 15 to 20-years in the non-wilderness portion and one trip every 15-years in the designated portion of the WSA for reservoir maintenance.

Mineral Resource Development Actions

A portion of the WSA including 33,460 acres would be withdrawn from mineral entry. All mineral exploration and development would end.

The 21,860 acres not designated wilderness would remain open to mineral entry. Over the next 15 to 20-years it is projected that 50 claims would be filed, at least 25 exploration holes would be drilled and development of a mine for precious metals would occur on the east side of the WSA. Mining activities would result in a surface disturbance of approximately 300 acres.

Energy Development Actions

The 33,460 acres of the WSA designated as wilderness would be closed to mineral leasing for oil and gas or geothermal resource development.

On the 21,860 acres not designated as wilderness, the lands would be available for leasing. Due to unfavorable geology there would be no leases, exploration or development of energy resources.

Recreation Management Actions

Under the Proposed Action, 33,460 acres of the WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. This would result in the closure of approximately 15 miles of the thirty-one miles of ways within the WSA. Visitor use in the entire WSA would be expected to slowly increase from an estimated 1,500 use days to 1,800 use days annually over the long-term. Non-motorized visitor use would be expected to slowly increase from approximately 100 visitor use days to 500 visitor use days per year over the long-term.

On the non-designated portion of the WSA, recreational ORV use would increase by 300 visitor use days to a total of 1,300 visitor days per year. Facilities for visitors would be limited to a two acre primitive campground in the non-wilderness portion of the High Rock Canyon.

Cultural Resource Management Actions

The High Rock Cultural Resource Management Plan call for test excavations in the designated portion of High Rock Canyon totalling fifty square feet which would require several days time. At the conclusion of excavations all holes would be backfilled to original contours. Several historic axle grease "graffiti" more than 130-years old would be protected along the Lassen-Applegate Trail by screen or glass barriers in High Rock Canyon. The total area of protection would total less than 100 square feet of cliff face in the designated area.

Wildlife Management Actions

The High Rock Habitat Management Plan calls for reestablishment of woody vegetation in Pole and High Rock Canyons. This would involve hand planting up to 1,000 cuttings of aspen, willow and wild roses. The plan also calls for prescription burning of several hundred acres in small blocks east of Pole Canyon to improve forage quality for antelope and future bighorn sheep. Bighorn sheep would be reintroduced into Pole Canyon and a longterm population of 200 sheep would be expected. Two artificial water sources east of Pole Canyon would be required to support the bighorn sheep. Each water source would involve placement of a storage tank in the ground with a metal apron above ground of several hundred square feet for collection of precipitation. Total surface disturbance would be two acres. All actions would be in the designated portion of the WSA.

Wild Horse and Burro Management Actions

Wild horses and burros would be gathered from the WSA at 3 to 4-year intervals in order to maintain population levels within management guidelines. Horses would be herded to a trap site in the non-wilderness portion of the WSA approximately three miles from the western boundary with a helicopter. Gathering would occur in the summer and fall. Horses would be removed from the WSA in large tractor-trailer rigs. Activity within the WSA would be limited to a week each time the herd was gathered. Use of the trap site would require two days of road maintenance with a road-grader prior to each gathering period due to washouts across stream channels. Road work would disturb less than one half mile each time the work was performed.

Watershed Management Actions

Two watershed management structures would be constructed in the northern end of the WSA within the non-designated area. Each structure would be approximately 250 feet long by ten feet high. The structures would reduce peak flows into High Rock and East Fork High Rock Canyons to allow riparian vegetation to become established in gullied channels. Total disturbance would be 10 acres. Each structure would require 10 vehicle trips.

Lands and Realty Actions

Approximately 3,320 acres of privately held mineral rights would be acquired through a mineral estate trade with the private owner. The acquired mineral estate would be withdrawn from mineral entry. The surface

of the lands are owned by the Federal government. One parcel of 160 acres would be acquired through exchange or sale. This parcel was identified for acquisition in the land use plan.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

55,320 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
0 Acres Non-wilderness
160 Acres Private Land to be Designated Wilderness if Acquired

The All Wilderness Alternative would designate the entire 55,320 acres of the East Fork High Rock Canyon WSA as wilderness. This includes 3,320 acres of split estate lands. An additional 160 acres of private land would also be designated if acquired. Under this alternative recreational ORV use would be eliminated. Livestock grazing would continue as an authorized non-conforming use. Discretionary management actions would be permitted only to preserve wilderness values.

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

Actions would be as described for the Proposed Action except that the two seeding areas (3,300 acres) would not be developed in the Wall Canyon and Nut Mountain Allotments. All construction and maintenance activities would occur in designated wilderness.

Mineral Resource Development Actions

The entire WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. No new minerals exploration work will occur since claims could not be filed.

Energy Development Actions

The entire WSA would be withdrawn from oil and gas or geothermal leasing.

Recreation Management Actions

The entire WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. The thirty-one miles of vehicle ways would be closed to use by recreational vehicles. Recreational ORV use of 1,300 visitor days would be eliminated. Non-motorized visitor use would slowly increase from 500 visitor use days to 1,000 visitor use days over the long-term. No visitor facilities would be developed.

Cultural Resource Management Actions

Cultural resource management activities for this alternative would be the same as described under the Proposed action.

Wildlife Management Actions

Wildlife management activities for this alternative would be the same as described under the Proposed Action..

Wild Horse and Burro Management Actions

Wild horses and burros would be gathered from the WSA at approximately 3- to 4-year intervals in order to maintain population levels within management guidelines. Horses would be herded from the WSA to outside trap sites with a helicopter during the summer/fall period. Activity within the WSA would be limited to a few days each time the herds were gathered.

Watershed Management Actions

No actions would occur. Two control structures would not be constructed.

Lands and Realty Actions

Lands and realty actions for this alternative would be the same as described under the Proposed Action.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

42,140 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
13,180 Acres Non-wilderness
160 Acres Private Land to be Designated Wilderness if Acquired

The Partial Wilderness Alternative would designate 41,140 acres of the East Fork High Rock Canyon WSA as wilderness. This portion of the WSA would be managed to preserve wilderness vales and permit existing grazing operations to continue. This includes 1,890 acres of split estate lands. An additional 160-acre parcel of private land would also be designated if acquired. The remainder of the WSA would not be designated as wilderness. Management of the non-wilderness portion would be under the guidance of the Cowhead/Massacre and Sonoma/Gerlach land use plans which emphasize the livestock, wildlife, recreation, cultural resource and wild horse values of the area (see Map 2-16).

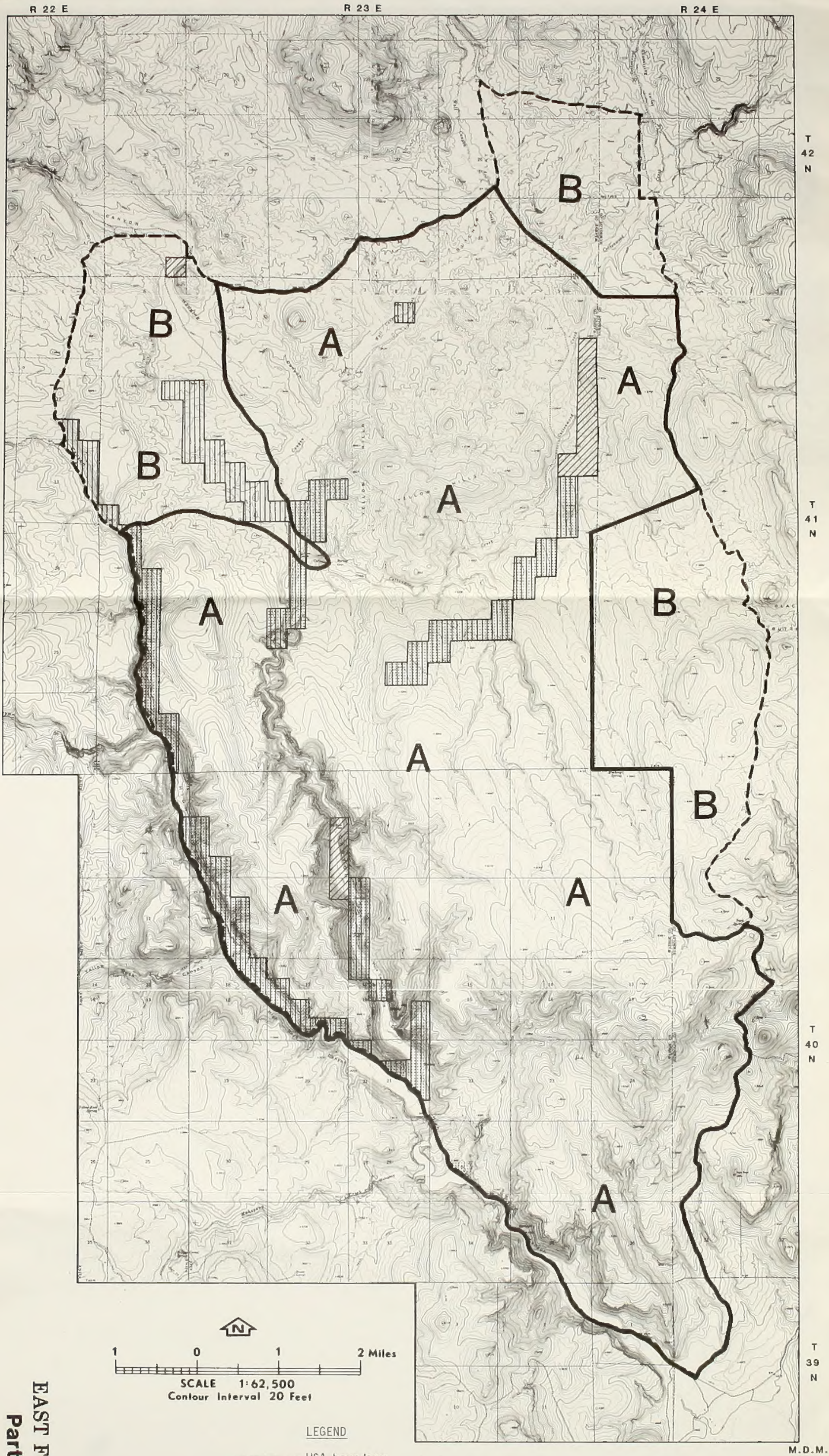
Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

The WSA would continue to provide 1,300 AUMs of cattle forage in four allotments. Approximately 750 of the 1,300 AUMs would be harvested in the designated portion of the WSA. Proposed projects to support existing levels of livestock use include one reservoir in the Wall Canyon Allotment and two seedings of 2,000 acres in the Nut Mountain Allotment and 1,300 acres in the Wall Canyon Allotment. Only the reservoir would be in the designated portion. Only 3 of the 60 vehicle trips required for the projects would occur in the designated portion.

Maintenance of projects would continue as described for the Proposed Action.

Mineral Resource Development Actions

A portion of the WSA including 41,140 acres would be withdrawn from mineral entry. All mineral exploration and development would end.



CA-020-914
EAST FORK HIGH ROCK CANYON
Partial Wilderness Alternative
MAP 2-16

The 13,180 acres not designated wilderness would remain open to mineral entry. Over the next 15 to 20-years it is projected that 50 claims would be filed, at least 25 exploration holes would be drilled and development of a mine for precious metals would occur on the east side of the WSA. Mining activities would result in a surface disturbance of approximately 300 acres.

Energy Development Actions

The 41,180 acres of the WSA designated as wilderness would be closed to mineral leasing for oil and gas or geothermal resource development.

On the 13,180 acres not designated as wilderness, the lands would be available for leasing. Due to unfavorable geology there would be no leases, exploration or development of energy resources.

Recreation Management Actions

Under this alternative, 41,140 acres of the WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. This would result in the closure of approximately 23 miles of the 31 miles of ways within the WSA. Visitor use on the entire WSA would be expected to remain near an estimated 1,500 use days annually over the long term. On the designated portion of the WSA, non-motorized visitor use would increase from 300 use days to 500 use days with the elimination of 300 recreational ORV visitor use days annually. On the Non-wilderness portion of the WSA, recreational ORV visitor use would remain constant at 1,000 visitor use days per year. No user facilities would be developed.

Cultural Resource Management Actions

Cultural resource management actions for this alternative would be the same as described under the Proposed Action. All actions would be in the designated portion of the WSA.

Wildlife Management Actions

Wildlife management activities for this alternative would be the same as described under the Proposed Action. All activities would occur in the designated portion of the WSA.

Wild Horse and Burro Management Actions

Wild horse and burro management activities for this alternative would be the same as described under the Proposed Action.

Watershed Management Actions

One watershed management structure would be constructed on the northern end of the WSA. The structure would be approximately 250 feet long by 10 feet high. The structure would reduce peak flows into the East Fork High Rock Canyon to allow riparian vegetation to become established in gullied channels. Total disturbance would be 5 acres. The structure would require 10 vehicle trips in the non-wilderness portion of the WSA.

Lands and Realty Actions

Lands the realty actions for this alternative would be the same as described under the Proposed Action.

NO WILDERNESS/NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

0 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
55,320 Acres Non-wilderness

The No Wilderness/No Action Alternative would not designate any of the East Fork High Rock Canyon WSA as wilderness. The area would be managed under the guidance of the BLM's Cowhead/Massacre and Sonoma/Gerlach land use plans that emphasize the livestock, wildlife, recreation, wild horse and cultural resource values of the area.

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

Livestock grazing and range management actions would be as described for the Proposed Action.

Mineral Resource Development Actions

The entire WSA would remain open for mineral entry under the appropriate laws and regulations except for approximately 7,000 acres in High Rock and the East Fork Canyons which are part of the High Rock ACEC mineral withdrawal. Over the long term it is projected that 50 claims would be filed, at least 25 exploration holes would be drilled and development of a mine would occur east of Pole Canyon. Mining activities would result in a surface disturbance of approximately 300 acres.

Energy Development Actions

The entire WSA would be open for mineral leasing for oil and gas or geothermal. It is not anticipated that any leases would be issued or any exploration holes would be drilled.

Recreation Management Actions

Existing ACEC management of High Rock and Pole Canyons would close 7,000 acres to recreational ORV use. As a result, approximately 15 miles of the 31 miles of ways would be closed to vehicle use. While 300 days of recreational ORV use would be eliminated, visitor use would be expected to slowly increase from 1,500 visitor days to 1,800 visitor days annually over the long term. Facilities would be as described for the Proposed Action.

Cultural Resource Management Actions

Cultural resource management activities for this alternative would be the same as described under the Proposed Action.

TABLE 11

COMPARISON OF IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES FOR THE EAST FORK HIGH ROCK CANYON WSA

Issue-Related Resources	Proposed Action (Partial Wilderness)	All Wilderness Alternative	Partial Wilderness Alternative	No-Wilderness/No Action Alternative
Wilderness Values	On the 33,620 designated as wilderness, naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation and the identified special features would be slightly enhanced. On the remainder of the WSA, naturalness would be lost on 3,650 acres due to mining and livestock improvements. Naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would be slightly reduced on the remainder of the non-wilderness portion. Special features would not be impacted.	All wilderness values would be protected and slightly enhanced over existing levels. Illegal ORV use on the northern end would slightly degrade solitude.	On the 43,300 acres designated as wilderness, naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation and the identified special features would be slightly enhanced. On the 21,860 acres of non-wilderness, naturalness would be lost on 3,620 acres. Naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would be slightly reduced on the remainder of the non-wilderness portion. Special features would not be impacted.	Naturalness would be lost on 3,700 acres due to mining and livestock improvements. On the remainder of the WSA, naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would be slightly reduced. Special features would not significantly change.
Livestock Grazing and Range Management	All actions proposed would occur. There would be no impacts on livestock grazing and range management activities.	Approximately 200 AUMs of forage would be foregone. This would lead to moderately slower rates of range improvements on two allotments.	All actions proposed would occur. There would be no impacts.	All actions proposed would occur. There would be no impacts.
Mineral Resource Development	The portion designated as wilderness has no known potential. The non-wilderness portion has potential for a mine. There would be no significant impacts on mineral resource development.	Exploration and development would be foregone on the entire 53,320 acre WSA. This would be a significant impact since development of a large mine would be precluded.	Mineral resource development would be foregone on 41,140 acres designated as wilderness. However, this portion has no known economic potential. The 13,180 acre non-wilderness portion has potential for a mine. There would be no significant impacts on mineral resource development.	Exploration and development could occur within the entire WSA. There would be no impacts on mineral resource development.
Recreational ORV Use	Elimination of 300 visitor days and closure of 15 miles of ways in the 33,620 acre portion designated wilderness would have only a negligible impact on recreational ORV use. This portion of the WSA receives little use. On the remaining 21,860 acres recreational ORV use would increase by 400 visitor days per year to a total of 1,400 visitor days.	Approximately 1,300 visitor use days of ORV use would be foregone annually. This would be a marginal impact since the use could be absorbed on other lands.	Elimination of 300 visitor days and closure of 23 miles of ways in the 42,300 acre portion designated wilderness would have only a negligible impact on recreational ORV use. This portion of the WSA receives little use. On the remaining 13,180 acres recreational ORV use would increase by 400 visitor days per year to a total of 1,400 visitor days.	The High Rock ACEC Management Plan would close 15 miles of ways within the 7,000 acre ACEC eliminating 300 visitor days of recreational ORV use. An increase of 300 visitor days would occur in the remainder of the WSA. Impacts would be negligible on recreational ORV use.

TABLE 11

COMPARISON OF IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES FOR THE EAST FORK HIGH ROCK CANYON WSA

Issue-Related Resources	Proposed Action (Partial Wilderness)	All Wilderness Alternative	Partial Wilderness Alternative	No-Wilderness/No Action Alternative
Wildlife Management Facilities	Two reservoirs would not be constructed. Antelope populations would not increase.	Two reservoirs would not be constructed. Antelope populations would not increase.	Two reservoirs would not be constructed. Antelope populations would not increase.	Two reservoirs would be constructed. Antelope populations would slightly increase.
Wild Horse & Burro Herd Management	Gathering actions would continue as currently practiced. There would be no impacts on herd management.	One trap site could not be used. Use of alternate trap sites would significantly increase gathering costs and animal stress.	Gathering actions would continue as currently practiced. There would be no impacts on herd management.	Gathering actions would continue as currently practiced. There would be no impacts on herd management.
Watershed Management	Two control structures would be constructed. Riparian habitat would be improved in the High Rock and East Fork drainages.	Two control structures would not be constructed. Riparian improvement rates in the High Rock and East Fork drainages would be moderately reduced.	One control structure would be constructed. Riparian improvement rates in the High Rock and East Fork drainages would be slightly reduced.	Two control structures would be constructed. Riparian habitat would be improved in the High Rock and East Fork drainages.

Wildlife Management Actions

All of the actions described for the Proposed Action would occur. Two additional reservoirs would be constructed on the benches east of Pole Canyon for summering antelope and wild horses.

Wild Horse and Burro Management Actions

Wild horses and burros would be gathered from the WSA at 3 to 4-year intervals in order to maintain population levels within management guidelines. Horses would be herded to a trap site in the non-wilderness portion of the WSA approximately three miles from the western boundary with a helicopter. Gathering would occur in the summer and fall. Horses would be removed from the WSA in large tractor-trailer rigs. Activity within the WSA would be limited to a week each time the herd was gathered. Use of the trap site would require road maintenance with a road-grader prior to each gathering period due to washouts across stream channels. Road work would disturb less than one-half mile each time the work was performed.

Watershed Management Actions

Two watershed control structures would be constructed on the northwestern portion of the WSA. Each structure would be 300 feet long and approximately 10 feet high. The structures would reduce peak flows into High Rock Canyon while gradually releasing water into Grassy Canyon into the summer months. Total surface disturbance would be ten acres. Construction would require 10 vehicle trips per site.

Lands and Realty Actions

Approximately 685 acres of privately held mineral rights would be acquired through a mineral estate trade with the private owner. The acquired mineral estate will be withdrawn from mineral entry. The surface of the lands are owned by the Federal government.

SHELDON CONTIGUOUS
(CA-020-1012)

PROPOSED ACTION (PARTIAL WILDERNESS)

780 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
23,350 Acres Non-wilderness

Under the Proposed Action 780 acres would be designated as wilderness if the contiguous administratively endorsed WSA on the Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge is also designated as wilderness. This small portion of the WSA would be managed to preserve wilderness values. The remainder of the WSA would not be designated. Management of the non-wilderness portion would be under the guidance of the Cowhead/Massacre land use plans which emphasize livestock and recreation uses of the area (see Map 2-17).

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

The WSA would continue to provide a total of 1,900 AUMs of cattle use in two allotments. All forage would be harvested in the non-wilderness portion of the WSA. Proposed projects to support the existing levels of livestock use are all in the Nevada Coleman Allotment and include two miles of fence and seven small reservoirs. All projects would be in the non-wilderness portion. Construction of the projects would require 30 vehicle trips.

Maintenance of the existing 7 reservoirs and 2¼ miles of fence projects would continue. Fence maintenance is usually done on foot or on horseback. However, if major maintenance is required, a pickup truck would be used to transport materials. Reservoir maintenance generally requires use of track mounted heavy equipment. Fences require annual inspection for minor maintenance and major maintenance at 5 to 10-year intervals. Reservoirs require maintenance at approximately 15-year intervals. The 60 acre spray area along the western boundary would be retreated with prescribed burning on a 15 to 20-year cycle as encroachment of sagebrush outcompetes the grass forage plants.

Maintenance of the existing livestock facilities requires 2 vehicle trips annually, plus 3 vehicle trips every 5-years for reservoir maintenance. The new projects would require one additional vehicle trip annually, and 2 additional vehicle trips every 5-years in the non-wilderness portion of the WSA.

Mineral Resource Development Actions

A very small portion of the WSA (780 acres) would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Since no mineral discovery has been made and there is a low favorability for mineral resource discovery, it is not anticipated that a mineral discovery would occur prior to designation. All mineral exploration and development activities would end.

The 23,350 acres not designated wilderness would remain open to mineral entry. Over the next 15 to 20-years it is projected that no claims would be filed and no exploration activity would occur.

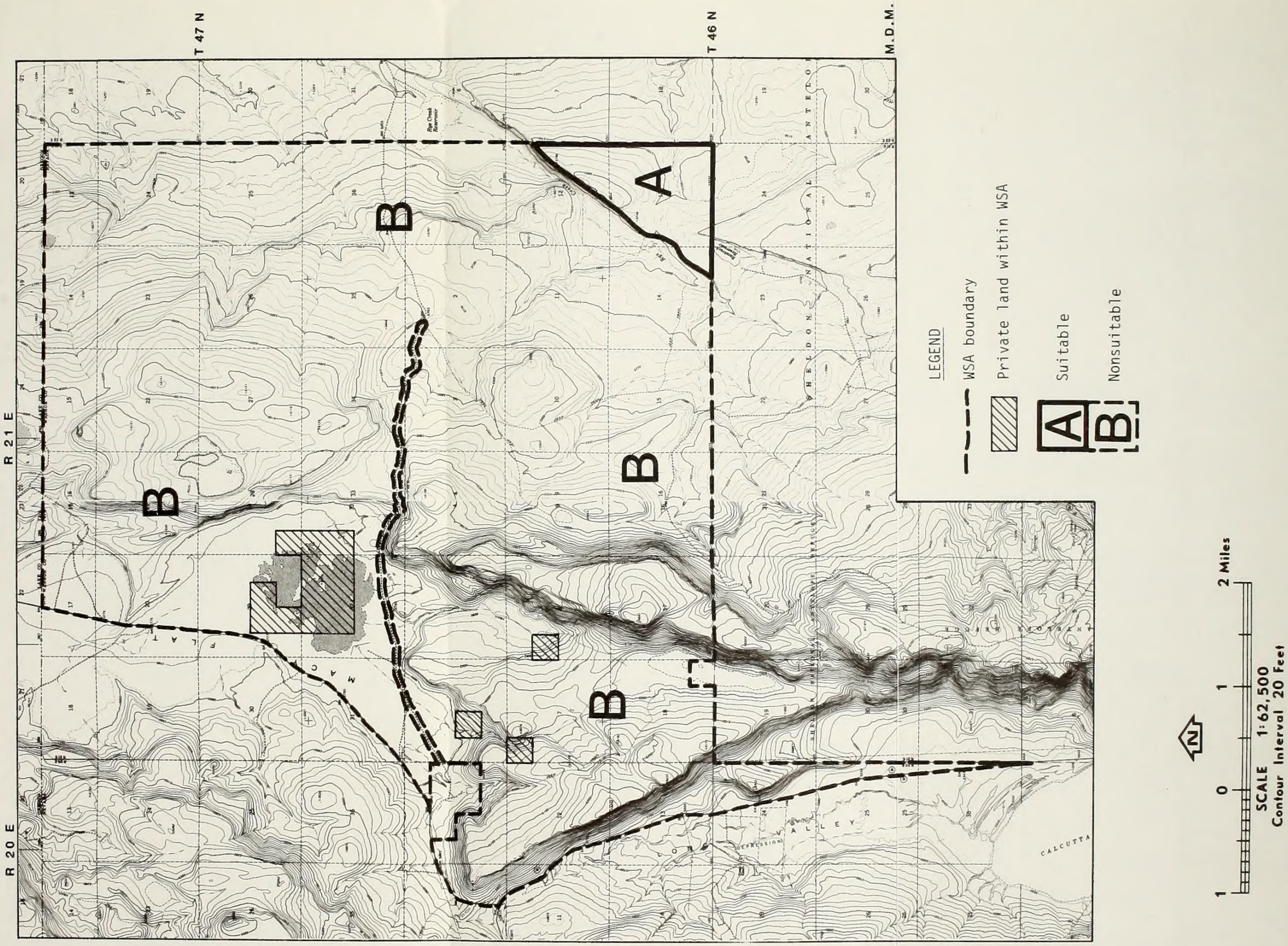
Energy Development Action

The 780 acres designated as wilderness would remain closed to mineral leasing for oil and gas or geothermal resources.

The 23,350 acres of the WSA not designated as wilderness would be opened for leasing. No leasing, exploration or development would be projected due to unfavorable geology.

Recreation Management Actions

Although 780 acres of the WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use, the designated area is completely inaccessible to vehicles. All the ways on the non-wilderness portion would be open for ORV travel. Visitor use would be expected to slowly increase from approximately 400 visitor use



CA-020-1012
SHELDON CONTIGUOUS
Proposed Action/Partial Wilderness
MAP 2-17

days to 500 visitor days annually as hunting quotas for deer and antelope increase. There are no visitor facilities planned for development.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

24,130 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
0 Acres Non-wilderness

All 24,130 acres in the Sheldon Contiguous WSA would be designated as wilderness. Under this alternative recreational ORV use would be eliminated. Livestock grazing would continue as an authorized non-conforming use. Discretionary management actions would be permitted only to preserve wilderness values.

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

The WSA would continue to provide a total of 1,900 AUMs of cattle use in two allotments. Nevada Coleman livestock use 1,875 AUMs with Calcutta cattle harvesting the other 25 AUMs. Proposed projects to support the existing levels of livestock use are all in the Nevada Coleman Allotment and include 2½ miles of fence and 7 small reservoirs.

Maintenance of existing and proposed projects would continue as described in the Proposed Action.

Mineral Resource Development Actions

The entire WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Since no mineral discovery has been made and based on the low favorability for mineral resource accumulation, it is not anticipated that a mineral discovery would occur prior to designation. No new minerals exploration work will occur since claims could not be filed.

Energy Development Actions

The entire WSA would be withdrawn from oil and gas or geothermal leasing.

Recreation Management Actions

The entire WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use eliminating 400 visitor days annually. The twenty-three miles of vehicle ways would be closed. Non-motorized visitor use would be expected to increase by approximately 200 visitor days to 200 visitor use days per year following the restriction of vehicle access.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

12,470 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
11,660 Acres Non-wilderness

The Partial Wilderness Alternative would designate 12,470 acres as wilderness. This portion of the WSA would be managed to preserve wilderness values and permit existing livestock grazing operations to continue. The remainder of the WSA would not be designated as wilderness. Management of the non-wilderness portion would be under the guidance of the Cowhead/

Massacre Planning Units land use plans which emphasize livestock and wildlife use of the area (see Map 2-18).

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

The WSA would continue to provide a total of 1,900 AUMs of cattle use in two allotments. Approximately 900 of the 1,900 AUMs within the WSA would be harvested in the designated portion. Proposed projects to support the existing levels of livestock use are all in the Nevada Coleman Allotment and include 2¼ miles of fence and 7 small reservoirs. Five reservoirs and all the fence would be constructed in the designated portion. This would result in 30 vehicle trips, of which 24 trips would occur in the designated portion of the WSA.

Maintenance of projects would continue as described for the Proposed Action. The prescribed burning and approximately half of the existing and proposed maintenance activities would occur in the non-wilderness portion of the WSA.

Mineral Resource Development Actions

A portion of the WSA encompassing 12,470 acres would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Since no mineral discovery has been made and based upon a low favorability for mineral resource discovery, it is not anticipated that a mineral discovery would occur prior to designation. All mineral exploration and development would end.

The 11,660 acres not designated as wilderness would be open to mineral entry. Over the next 15 to 20-years no activities would be anticipated on the WSA due to low potential for economically developable mineral deposits.

Energy Development Actions

Although almost half of the WSA would be open for oil and gas or geothermal leasing, it is anticipated that no leasing or exploration would occur during the next 15 to 20-years due to unfavorable geology.

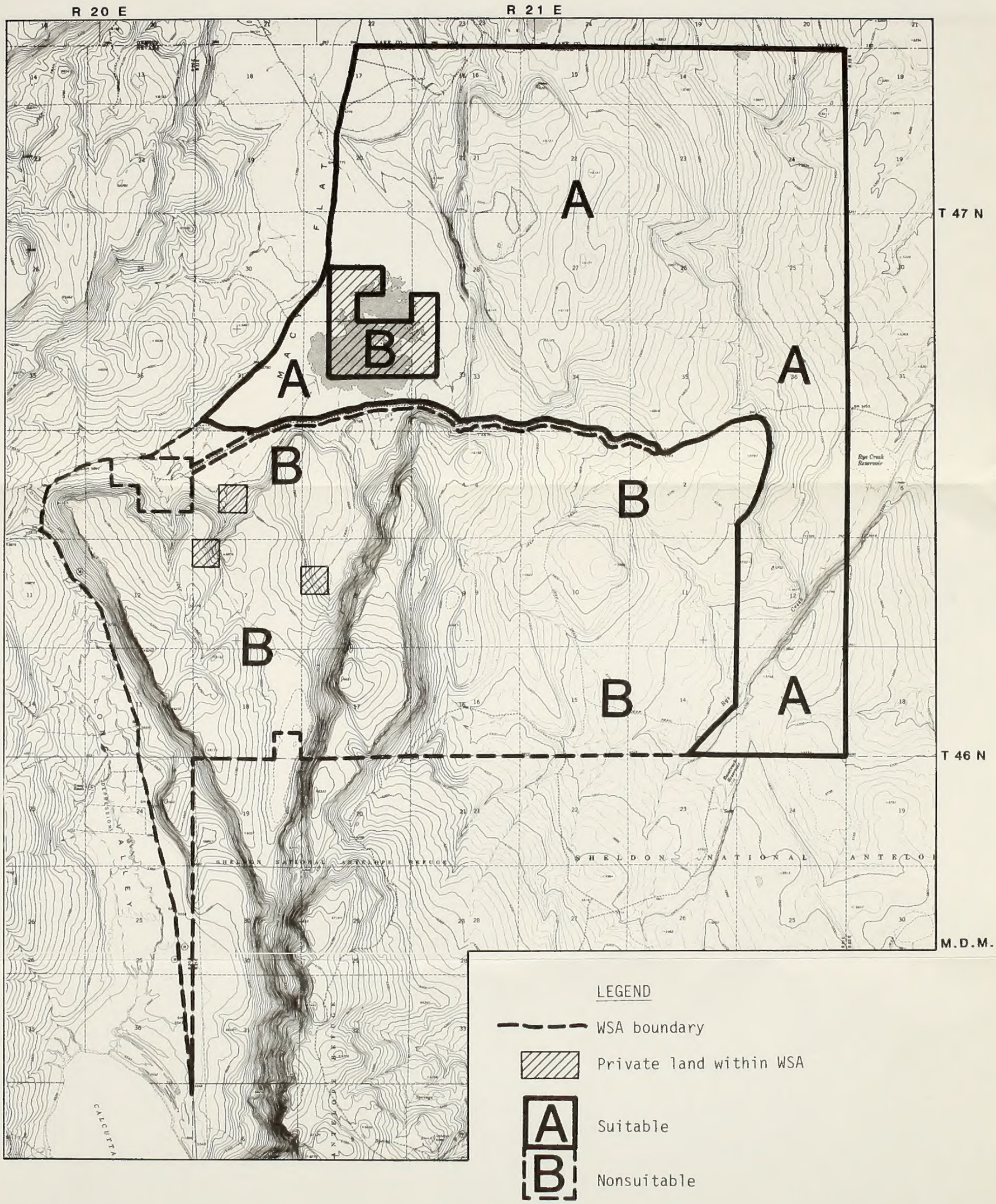
Recreation Management Actions

Approximately half of the WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. This would result in the closure of ten miles of infrequently used vehicle ways. Visitor use would be expected to slowly increase from 400 to 500 recreational ORV visitor use days annually. Virtually all of the use would occur in the non-wilderness portion. Although half of the WSA would be closed to ORV travel, the closed area receives almost no current visitor use and that would not change after designation.

NO WILDERNESS/NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

0 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
24,130 Acres Non-wilderness

None of the Sheldon Contiguous WSA would be designated as wilderness. The area's 24,130 acres would be managed under the guidance of the BLM's



CA-020-1012
SHELDON CONTIGUOUS
Partial Wilderness Alternative
MAP 2-18

TABLE 12
COMPARISON OF IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES FOR THE SHELDON CONTIGUOUS WSA

Issue-Related Resources	Proposed Action (Partial Wilderness)	All Wilderness Alternative	Partial Wilderness Alternative	No-Wilderness/No Action Alternative
Wilderness Values	Wilderness values on 780 acres would remain unchanged. The 26,000 acre Sheldon Refuge would be slightly larger. On the non-wilderness portion of the WSA, naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would be slightly reduced.	All wilderness values would be protected and slightly enhanced over enhanced over existing levels. Illegal ORV use would slightly reduce solitude on the western portion of the WSA. The combined BLM/FWS wilderness would be over 80,000 acres.	On the 12,470 acres of wilderness naturalness would be slightly reduced by project development. Opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would be slightly improved. The opportunity for creation of a BLM/FWS wilderness area would be slightly enhanced. On the non-wilderness portion, naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would be slightly reduced.	Opportunities for solitude and naturalness would slightly decline over the long term with project development and ORV use. Any BLM/FWS wilderness opportunities would be foregone.
Recreational ORV Use	There would be no significant impacts on recreational ORV use. The designated portion has no vehicle access and receives little if any use.	Recreational ORV use would be eliminated with 400 visitor use days foregone annually.	All of the current ORV use as well as a projected increase of 100 visitor use days would be accommodated on the 12,470 acre non-wilderness portion of the WSA. There would be only negligible impacts.	ORV use would slowly increase by 100 visitor days to a total of 500 visitor days. There would be no impacts on recreational ORV use.

Cowhead/Massacre planning units existing land use plans that emphasize livestock and wildlife uses of the area.

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

The WSA would continue to provide a total of 1,900 AUMs of cattle use in two allotments. Proposed projects to support the existing levels of livestock use are all in the Nevada Coleman Allotment and include two miles of fence and seven small reservoirs.

Maintenance of projects would continue as described for the Proposed Action.

Mineral Resource Development Actions

All of the WSA would be open to mineral entry. However, no claims, exploration or development would be anticipated over the long-term due to unfavorable potential for economically developable mineral deposits.

Energy Development Actions

The entire WSA would be open to mineral leasing. It would not be anticipated that any leases would be issued or that any exploration would occur.

Recreation Management Actions

The entire WSA would be open for recreational ORV use. Recreational ORV visitor use is expected to increase from approximately 400 use days to 500 use days annually over the long-term. No user facilities are planned for development.

MASSACRE RIM
(CA-020-1013)

PROPOSED ACTION (PARTIAL WILDERNESS)

23,260 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
86,740 Acres Non-wilderness, Including 48,730 Acres ACEC

The proposed action for the Massacre Rim WSA would designate 23,260 acres as wilderness. This portion of the WSA would be managed to preserve wilderness values and permit existing livestock grazing operations to continue. The remainder of the WSA would not be designated as wilderness. Management of the non-wilderness portion would be under the guidance of the Cowhead/Massacre land use plans which emphasize the livestock, wild horses and cultural resource values of the area. A portion of

the non-wilderness would be designated as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) designed to protect and enhance cultural and wildlife values (see Map 2-19).

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

The WSA would continue to provide 7,425 AUMs of cattle and sheep forage in seven allotments. Approximately 1,600 AUMs would be used within the designated portion of the WSA. The remaining 5,825 AUMs would be harvested in the non-wilderness portion. Proposed projects to support existing levels of livestock use in the designated portion of the WSA are limited to six reservoirs. Surface disturbance for these projects would be approximately one acre per site. On the non-wilderness portion, a 700 acre seeding would be developed, as well as thirteen reservoirs, 1¼ half mile of fence, and eight spring developments. Total surface disturbance for the small scale projects would be approximately 20 acres. The new projects would require approximately 100 vehicle trips during construction, of which 18 trips would be made in the designated portion of the WSA.

Maintenance of the existing 32 reservoirs, 5 springs, 54 miles of fence, 7 windmills and 4,500 acres of seedings would continue. Fence, windmills and spring maintenance is usually done on foot or on horseback. However, if major maintenance is required, a pickup truck would be required to transport materials. Reservoir maintenance generally requires use of track mounted heavy equipment. Fences, windmills and springs require annual inspection for minor maintenance and require major maintenance at 5 to 10-year intervals. Reservoirs require maintenance at approximately 15-year intervals. Vegetative modification projects such as seedings or sprays are retreated with herbicides on a 15 to 20-year cycle as encroachment of sagebrush outcompetes the grass forage plants. All the vegetation modification projects and fences would occur in the non-designated portion of the WSA, as well as 13 spring developments, 7 windmills and 39 reservoirs. The portion designated as wilderness would have maintenance on 1 spring development and 14 reservoirs.

Maintenance activities in the designated portion of the WSA would require 1 vehicle trip annually and an additional 6 vehicle trips every 5-years for reservoir and spring maintenance. On the non-wilderness portion of the WSA, maintenance activities would require 20 vehicle trips per year and 10 vehicle trips every 5-years for maintenance of all types of projects. The new projects would require 1 additional vehicle trip annually and an additional 6 trips every 5-years in the non-wilderness portion, and 2 additional trips every 5-years in the designated portion of the WSA.

The requirements for herding of two bands of sheep on the non-wilderness portion of the WSA would require the support of one tent camp which would be moved by truck on 4-day intervals during June and October.

Mineral Resource Development Actions

A portion of the WSA including 23,260 acres would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Based upon a past history of no exploratory or

mining claims, no ongoing minerals activity would be affected by the designation of the area as wilderness.

The 86,840 acres not designated wilderness would remain open to mineral entry. Over the next 15 to 20-years, it is projected that 20 new claims would be filed adjacent to the 75 existing claims at the north end of the WSA. Several hundred holes would be drilled and eventually a mine would be developed. Based upon nearby mining activity, it is anticipated that 300 acres of the WSA would be disturbed as part of an open pit, roads, rock dumps, ponds, building sites or leach pads.

Energy Development Actions

The 23,260 acres of the WSA designated as wilderness would be closed to mineral leasing for oil and gas or geothermal resource development.

On the 86,740 acres not designated as wilderness, the lands would be available for leasing. It is not anticipated that there will be leasing, exploration or development of leasable minerals including oil and gas to a low and very low potential for development.

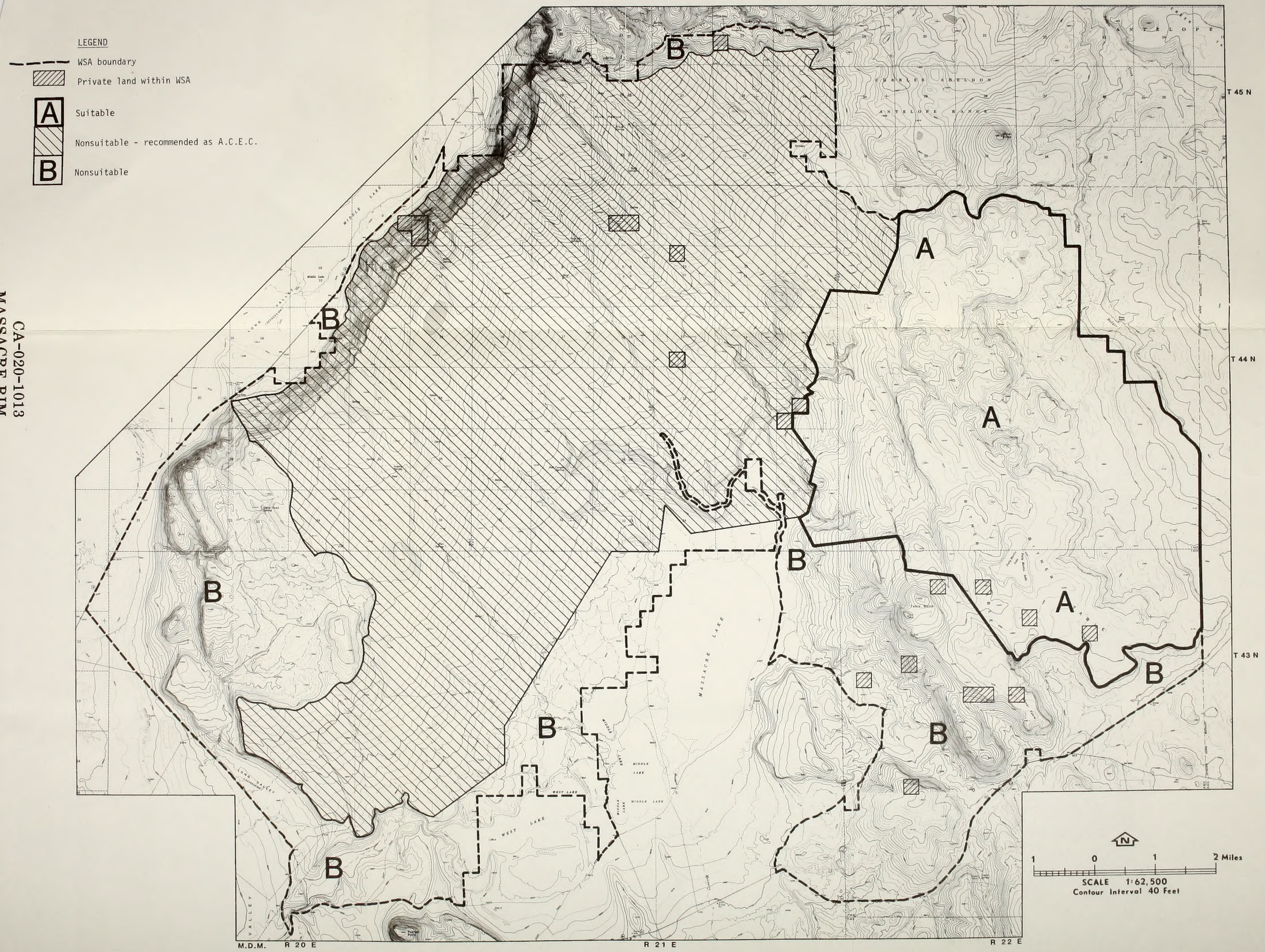
An existing right-of-way for a 500 KV (or larger) powerline would be developed on approximately one and a half mile at the western boundary. One hundred foot high towers would be erected and large cables strung. Total surface disturbance would be 50 acres. This action would occur on the non-wilderness portion of the WSA.

Recreation Management Action

Approximately one-fifth of the WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. This would result in the closure of six miles of the 39 miles of vehicle ways and eliminate 100 visitor days of ORV use. Non-motorized visitor use on the designated portion of the WSA would remain at current estimated levels of 100 use days per year. On the non-wilderness portion use levels would be expected to increase from 700 to an estimated 900 recreational ORV visitor days annually over the long-term. There are no recreational visitor facilities planned within the WSA.

Cultural Resources Management Actions

The Massacre Lakes Cultural Resources Management Plan (CRMP) calls for a number of activities related to the protection, study and interpretation of cultural resources. Existing protective fences north of Massacre Lake would be inspected and maintained yearly. One-half mile of new fence would be constructed on the western edge of the WSA. Private lands north of Massacre Lake (240 acres) would be acquired if possible and 1,600 acres in the same area would be withdrawn from mineral entry. Large scale excavations by researchers would be carried out on nine sites over a three month period. Approximately 100 test pits would be dug then backfilled by



CA-020-1013
MASSACRE RIM
Proposed Action/Partial Wilderness
MAP 2-19

CHARLES SHELDON
ANTELOPE RANGE
ANTELOPE CREEK
Badger Creek
Badger
East Spring
TRAIL
A

T 45 N

a crew of 15 archaeologists. Total surface disturbance for the excavations would be 2,000 square feet. Interpretive signs would be placed at two locations within the WSA. All actions would occur in the non-wilderness portion of the WSA.

Wildlife Management Actions

The proposed Massacre Rim Habitat Management Plan (HMP) would provide for a reintroduction of bighorn sheep in cooperation with the Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge. Proposed projects to support the reintroduction would be limited to development of one spring with hand tools and prescription burning of 100 acres in 10 acre blocks on the western edge of the WSA. The projects would be developed in the non-wilderness portion of the WSA.

Wild Horse Management Actions

Wild horses will be gathered from the WSA at approximately 3 to 4-year intervals in order to maintain population levels within management guidelines. Horses will be herded to one of two trap sites within the WSA. One is in the center of the WSA and the other just within the boundary east of Massacre Lake. The horses would be removed from the WSA in tractor-trailer rigs. The gathering occurs during the summer/fall period. Activity within the WSA would be limited to a few days each time the herds are gathered. Both trap sites would be in the non-wilderness portion of the WSA.

Predator Control Actions

The non-wilderness portion of the WSA would occasionally receive predator control activities in the form of aerial control flights. The WSA is used only as a trail route between spring/fall and summer ranges for one week each way. Control would occur only as needed to prevent significant sheep losses.

Fuelwood Management Actions

The Little Basin juniper forest would be reopened to fuelwood harvest. Total harvest would primarily be made from mid summer into late fall each year. Woodcutting would result in the selective harvest of large trees or approximately ten acres per year in the non-wilderness portion of the WSA. Woodcutting would involve 40 vehicle trips per year.

ALL WILDERNESS

110,000 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
0 Acres Non-wilderness

All 110,000 acres in the Massacre Rim WSA would be designated as wilderness. Under this alternative, recreational ORV use would be eliminated. Livestock grazing would continue as an authorized non-conforming use. Discretionary management actions would be permitted only to preserve wilderness values.

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

The WSA would continue to provide 7,425 AUMs of livestock forage for cattle and sheep in seven allotments. Proposed projects to support existing levels of livestock use include nineteen reservoirs, one and one-half mile of fence, and eight spring developments. Total surface disturbance for the projects would be less than 30 acres.

Maintenance of projects would continue as described for the Proposed Action, except that seeding/spray projects would be retreated with prescribed burning at approximately 25-year intervals as encroachment of sagebrush reduced forage production. This would require 40 vehicle trips associated with the prescribed burning.

The requirements for herding of two bands of sheep on the western side of the WSA would require the support of one tent camp which would be moved by truck on four day intervals during June and October.

Mineral Resource Development Actions

The entire WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Since no mineral discovery has been made and based upon the low favorability of mineral resource accumulation and a moderate potential for precious metals on the northern portion of the WSA, it is not anticipated that mineral discovery would occur prior to designation. The seventy-five mining claims at the north end of the WSA would become invalid due to the lack of mineral discovery and no future mineral exploration activities would occur.

Energy Development Actions

The entire WSA would be withdrawn from oil and gas or geothermal leasing.

An existing right-of-way for a 500 KV (or larger) powerline would be developed on approximately one and a half mile of the western boundary. One hundred foot high towers would be erected and large cables strung. Total surface disturbance would be 50 acres.

Recreation Management Actions

The entire WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. The 39 miles of vehicle ways would be closed to recreational vehicles. Non-motorized visitor use would be expected to increase by 350 visitor days to 400 use days annually. Approximately 750 visitor use days per year of recreational ORV use would be eliminated by the closure to ORVs.

Cultural Resource Management Actions

The Massacre Lakes CRMP calls for a number of activities within the WSA related to cultural values. Wilderness designation would limit the activities to maintenance of existing fences and construction of one-half mile of protective enclosure fence. Private lands north of Massacre Lakes (240

acres) would be acquired if possible. Ten test pits at seven archaeological sites would be excavated and refilled with a total surface disturbance of less than 100 square feet. Total time required for all the excavations would be two weeks.

Wildlife Management Actions

All projects listed for the Proposed Action would be developed.

Wild Horse Management Actions

Wild horse management actions for this alternative would be the same as described under the Proposed Action.

Predator Control Actions

Predator control actions for this alternative would be the same as described under the Proposed Action.

Fuelwood Management Actions

No firewood would be harvested within the WSA.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE A

91,170 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
18,830 Acres Non-wilderness

The Partial Wilderness Alternative A would designate 91,170 acres as wilderness. This portion of the WSA would be managed to preserve wilderness values and permit existing livestock grazing operations to continue. The remainder of the WSA would not be designated as wilderness. Management of the non-wilderness portion would be managed under the guidance of the Cowhead/Massacre land use plan which emphasizes livestock, wildlife, wild horses and cultural resources on the area (see Map 2-20).

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

The WSA would continue to provide 7,425 AUMs for cattle and sheep forage in seven allotments. Approximately 6,150 AUMs would be harvested within the designated portion. The remaining 1,275 AUMs would be available in the non-wilderness portion. Proposed projects in the designated portion of the WSA to support existing levels of livestock use include 14 reservoirs and 8 spring developments. Total surface disturbance would be approximately 20 acres. These reservoirs would require 40 vehicle trips for construction. On the non-wilderness portion, proposed projects include a 700 acre seeding, as well as 5 reservoirs and 1½ miles of fence with a total surface disturbance of approximately 6 acres for the small projects. These projects would require 60 vehicle trips during construction.

Maintenance activities would continue as described for the Proposed Action. All of the vegetation modification projects, three windmills sixteen miles of fence and four reservoirs would be in the non-wilderness portion, while the remainder of the projects would be maintained in the portion of the WSA designated as wilderness. The number of vehicle trips within the designated portion of the WSA would be 15 trips annually and 10 trips every 5-years associated with existing projects, and an additional 3 trips every 5-years associated with the new projects. In the non-wilderness portion of the WSA, there would be 6 annual vehicle trips and 6 vehicle trips every 5-years associated with the existing projects, and 4 additional trips every 5-years associated with new projects.

The requirements for herding of two bands of sheep on the western side of the WSA would require the support of one tent camp which would be moved by truck on 4 day intervals during June and October.

Mineral Resource Development Actions

A large portion of the WSA would be withdrawn for mineral entry (91,170 acres). Based upon a past history of no exploration or mining claims, no ongoing mineral activity would be affected by designation of the area as wilderness.

The 18,830 acres of the WSA not designated as wilderness would remain open to mineral entry. Over the next 15 to 20-years, it is projected that 20 new claims would be filed adjacent to the 75 existing claims at the north end of the WSA. Several hundred exploration holes would be drilled and eventually a mine would be developed. Based upon other mining activity in the region, it would be anticipated that 300 acres of the WSA would be disturbed as part of an open pit, roads, rock dumps, ponds, building sites and leach pads.

Energy Development Actions

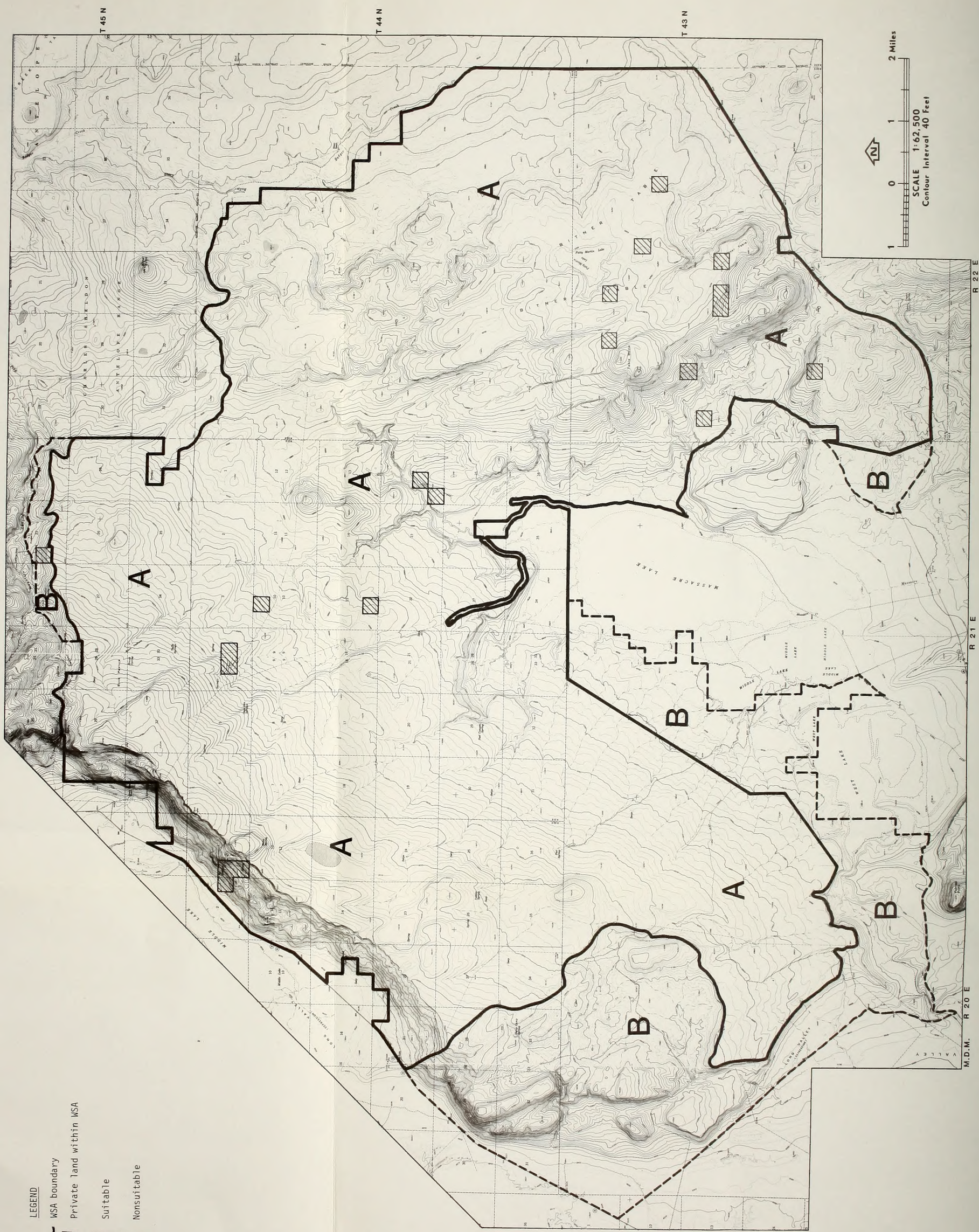
The 91,170 acres of the WSA designated as wilderness would be closed to mineral leasing for oil and gas or geothermal resource development.

On the 18,830 acres not designated as wilderness, the lands would be available for leasing. Although this portion of the WSA contains areas that are prospectively valuable for geothermal resources, it is not anticipated that there will be any leasing, exploration or development of leasable minerals including oil and gas due to a low to very low potential for development.

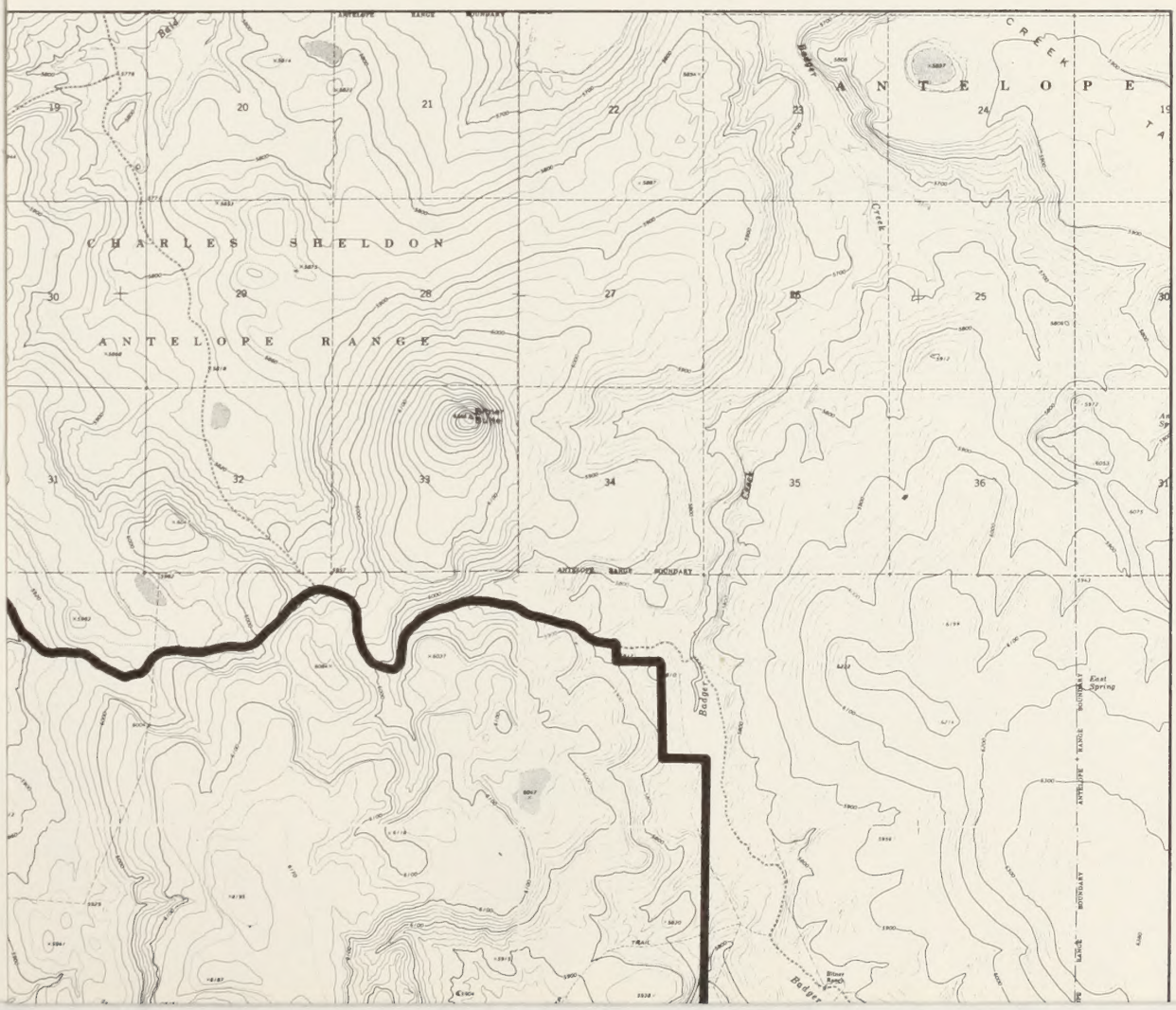
An existing right-of-way for a 500 KV (or larger) powerline would be developed on approximately one and a half mile at the western boundary. One hundred foot high towers would be erected and large cables strung. Total surface disturbance would be 50 acres. This action would occur on the non-wilderness portion of the WSA.

Recreation Management Actions

Over 80 percent of the WSA, 91,170 acres would be closed to recreational ORV use. this would result in a closure of approximately 15 miles of the 39 miles of vehicle ways. Approximately 400 visitor days would be eliminated in the wilderness portion of the WSA. Non-motorized visitor use on Alternatives



CA-020-1013
MASSACRE RIM
Partial Wilderness Alternative A
MAP 2-20


CHARLES SHELDON
ANTELOPE RANGE
ANTELOPE CREEK
Badger Creek
Bald
ANTELOPE RANGE BOUNDARY
ANTELOPE BADGER BOUNDARY
East Spring
Bliss Ranch
19
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T 45 N

the designated portion of the WSA would increase from less than 50 visitor days annually to 200 visitor use days per year. On the non-designated portion, non-motorized visitor use levels would also be expected to decrease from 350 to 300 visitor use days per year. The decrease in use in the designated portion would occur because much of the current use is made by visitors passing through the "edge" of the WSA on the way to hunting opportunities on the benches. Total visitor use would be expected to decline from 800 to 500 visitor days annually. There would be no visitor facilities developed within the WSA.

Cultural Resource Management Actions

Actions would be as described under the All Wilderness Alternative.

Wildlife Management Actions

Projects would be as described for the Proposed Action, but would be developed in the designated portion of the WSA.

Wild Horse Management Actions

Actions as described for the Proposed Action would occur on the designated portion of the WSA.

Predator Control Actions

Activities as described under the Proposed Action would occur. Three-quarters of the activities (75 percent) would take place on the designated portion of the WSA.

Fuelwood Management Actions

Actions as described for the Proposed Action would occur on the non-designated portion of the WSA.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE B

61,240 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
48,760 Acres Non-wilderness

Partial Wilderness Alternative B would designate 61,240 acres as wilderness. This portion of the WSA would be managed to preserve wilderness values and permit existing livestock grazing operations to continue. The remainder of the WSA would not be designated as wilderness. Management of the non-wilderness portion would be under the guidance of the Cowhead/Massacre land use plan which emphasizes livestock, wildlife, wild horses and cultural resources on the area (see Map 2-21).

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

The WSA would continue to provide 7,425 AUMs of cattle and sheep AUMs in seven allotments. Approximately 3,800 AUMs would be harvested within the designated portion of the WSA. The remaining 3,575 AUMs would be used in

the non-wilderness portion of the WSA. Proposed projects in the designated portion of the WSA include twelve reservoirs and six spring developments. Total surface disturbance would be approximately 20 acres. Construction would require 48 vehicle trips. On the non-wilderness portion, proposed projects include a 700 acre seeding, as well as seven reservoirs, two spring developments and one and a half mile of fencing. Total surface disturbance on the small projects would be approximately ten acres. Construction would require 52 vehicle trips.

Maintenance activities would continue as described for the Proposed Action. All of the vegetation modification, all of the windmills, four spring developments, half of the reservoirs and approximately one-third of the fences would occur in the non-wilderness portion, while the remainder of the projects would be maintained in the designated portion of the WSA. The number of vehicle trips within the designated portion of the WSA would be 10 trips annually and 8 trips every 5-years associated with existing projects, and an additional 3 trips every 5-years associated with the new projects. In the non-wilderness portion of the WSA, there would be 11 trips annually and 8 trips every 5-years associated with the existing projects, and an additional 4 trips every 5-years associated with the new projects.

The requirements for herding of two bands of sheep on the western side of the WSA would require the support of one tent camp which would be moved by truck on four day intervals during June and October.

Mineral Resource Development Actions

A large portion of the WSA would be withdrawn from mineral entry (61,240 acres). Based upon a past history of no exploration or mining claims, no ongoing mineral activity would be affected by designation of the area as wilderness.

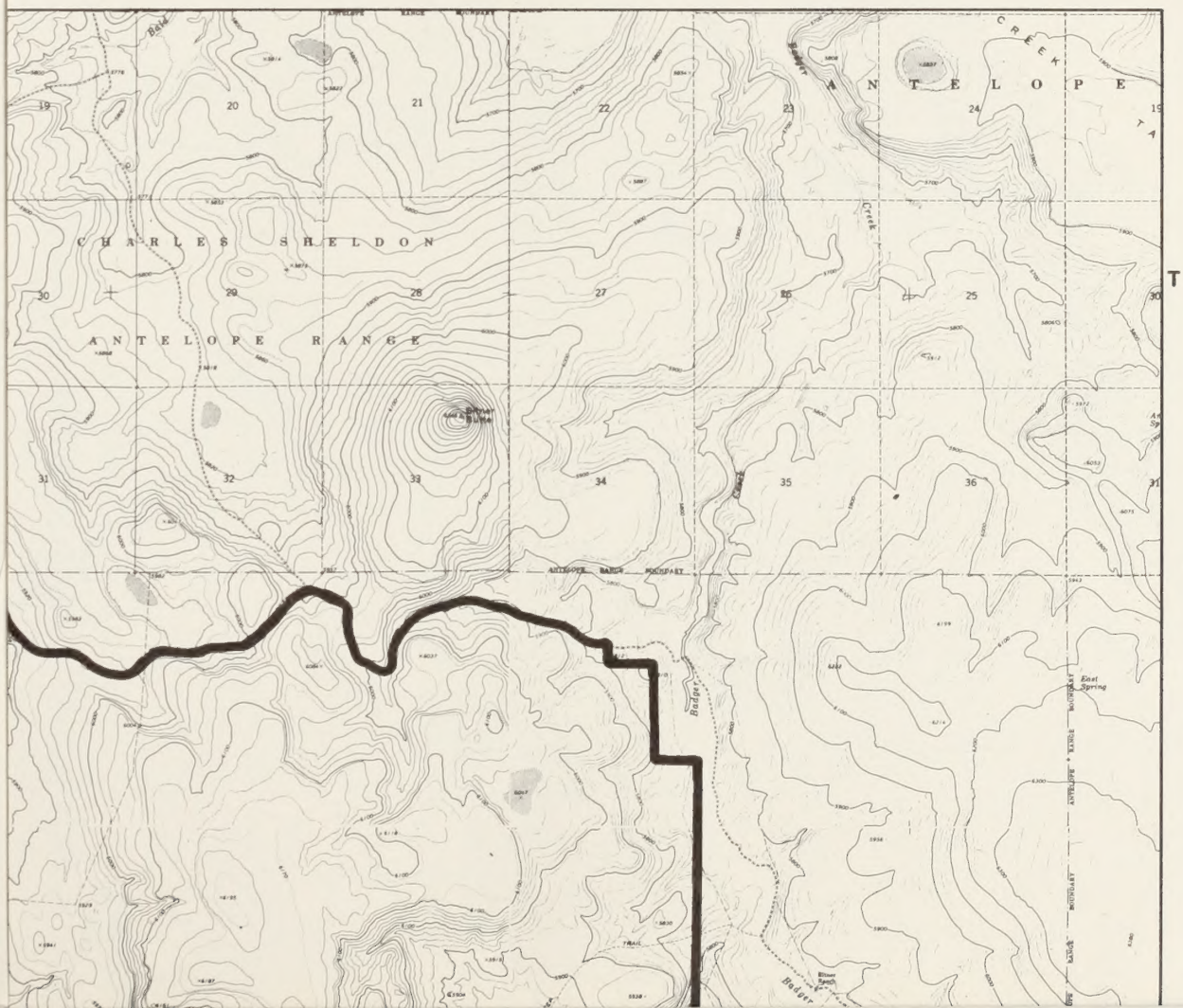
The 48,760 acres of the WSA not designated as wilderness would remain open to mineral entry. Over the next 15 to 20-years, it is projected that 20 new claims would be filed adjacent to the 75 existing claims at the north end of the WSA. Several hundred exploration holes would be drilled and eventually a mine would be developed. Based upon other mining activity in the region, it would be anticipated that 300 acres of the WSA would be disturbed as part of an open pit, roads, rock dumps, ponds, building sites and leach pads.

Energy Development Actions

The 61,240 acres of the WSA designated as wilderness would be closed to mineral leasing for oil and gas or geothermal resource development.

On the 48,760 acres not designated as wilderness, the lands would be available for leasing. Although this portion of the WSA contains areas that are prospectively valuable for geothermal resources, it is not anticipated that there will be any leasing, exploration or development of leasable minerals including oil and gas due to a low to very low potential for development.

CA-020-1013
MASSACRE RIM
Partial Wilderness Alternative B
MAP 2-21


CHARLES SHELDON
ANTELOPE RANGE
ANTELOPE CREEK
Badger Creek
East Spring
T 45 N

An existing right-of-way for a 500 KV (or larger) powerline would be developed on approximately one and a half mile at the western boundary. One hundred foot high towers would be erected and large cables strung. Total surface disturbance would be 50 acres. This action would occur on the non-wilderness portion of the WSA.

Recreation Management Actions

A little more than half of the WSA 61,240 acres, would be closed to recreational ORV use. This would result in a closure of approximately eight of the 39 miles of vehicle ways within the WSA and elimination of 250 visitor days. Non-motorized visitor use on the designated portion of the WSA would be expected to increase from less than 50 to 150 visitor use days per year. On the non-designated portion, visitor use levels would be expected to slowly increase from 500 to 650 motorized visitor use days annually over the long-term. Total visitor use within the WSA would remain about the same as existing levels as the gains and losses offset each other. There are no facilities for visitor use planned within the WSA.

Cultural Resource Management Actions

Actions under the Massacre Lakes CRMP would be limited to five test pits within the designated portion and thirty-five test pits and an informational sign in the non-designated portion. Surface disturbance would be approximately 50 square feet in the designated portion and 500 square feet in the non-wilderness portion.

Wildlife Management Actions

Actions would be as described for the Proposed Action, but half of the burning (50 acres) and the spring development would occur in the designated portion.

Wild Horse Management Actions

Actions as described for the Proposed Action would occur on the non-designated portion of the WSA.

Predator Control Actions

Activities as described under the Proposed Action would occur. Approximately one-third of the flights would occur over the designated portion of the WSA.

Fuelwood Management Actions

Activities described for the Proposed Action would occur on the non-designated portion of the WSA.

NO WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

0 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
110,000 Acres Non-wilderness

None of the Massacre Rim WSA would be designated as wilderness. The area would be managed under the guidance of the Cowhead/Massacre land use plan that emphasizes the livestock, wildlife, wild horses and cultural resources of the area.

Livestock Grazing and Range Management Actions

The uses and project activities would be as described under the Proposed Action, with all actions occurring in a non-wilderness environment.

Mineral Resource Development Actions

With the exception of 1,600 acres withdrawn due to cultural resource values, the entire WSA would remain open for mineral entry. Over the long-term it would be anticipated that minerals activity would only occur at the northern end of the WSA. Twenty additional claims would be filed near the 75 existing claims. Eventually, an open pit mine would be developed with a total surface disturbance of 300 acres.

Energy Development Actions

The entire WSA with the exception of the 1,600 acres withdrawn for cultural resources, would be open to mineral leasing for oil and gas or geothermal. It is not anticipated that any leases would be issued or any exploration holes would be drilled due to a low to very low potential for development.

The existing powerline right-of-way would be developed as described under the Proposed Action.

Recreation Management Actions

None of the WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. No vehicle ways would be closed. Visitor use is expected to slowly increase from the current level of 750 visitor days to an estimated 950 motorized visitor use days annually over the long-term. No facilities would be developed for recreational users.

Cultural Resources Management Actions

Cultural resource management activities for this alternative would be the same as described under the Proposed Action.

Wildlife Management Actions

Wildlife management activities for this alternative would be the same as described under the Proposed Action.

Wild Horse Management Actions

Wild horse management actions for this alternative would be the same as described under the Proposed Action.

Predator Control Actions

Predator control actions for this alternative would be the same as described under the Proposed Action.

Fuelwood Management Actions

Fuelwood management actions for this alternative would be the same as described under the Proposed Action

TABLE 13
COMPARISON OF IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES FOR THE MASSACRE RIM WSA

Issue-Related Resources	Proposed Action (Partial Wilderness)	All Wilderness Alternative	Partial Wilderness A Alternative	Partial Wilderness B Alternative	No Wilderness/No Action Alternative
Wilderness Values	On the 26,260 acres of wilderness, naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would be negligibly enhanced. On the 86,740 acres of non-wilderness, naturalness would be lost on 1,250 acres. On the remainder of the non-wilderness portion, naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would be slightly reduced. The identified special features would slightly benefit from ACEC designation.	All wilderness values within the 110,000 acre WSA would be protected and slightly enhanced over existing levels. Illegal ORV use at edges of WSA would slightly reduce opportunities for solitude.	On the 91,170 acres of wilderness, naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation and the identified special features would be slightly enhanced. Or the 18,830 acres of non-wilderness, Naturalness would be lost on 1,280 acres. Or the remainder of the non-wilderness portion, naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would be slightly reduced.	On the 61,240 acres of wilderness, naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation and most of the identified special features would be slightly enhanced. On the 48,760 acres of non-wilderness, naturalness would be lost on 1,250 acres. On the remainder of the non-wilderness portion, naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation and a portion of the identified special features would be slightly reduced.	Naturalness would be lost on 1,250 acres. On the remainder of the WSA, naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation and the identified special features would be slightly reduced.
Livestock Grazing and Range Management	All proposed activities would occur. There would be no impacts on livestock grazing and range management activities.	Approximately 150 AUMs of forage would be foregone. This would lead to slightly slower rates of range improvements on one allotment.	All proposed activities would occur. There would be no impacts.	All proposed activities would occur. There would be no impacts.	All proposed activities would occur. There would be no impacts.
Mineral Resource Development	Exploration and development would be precluded on the 26,260 acres designated as wilderness. However, this portion has no known economic potential. The 86,740 acre non-wilderness portion would be open for development. There would be no significant impact.	Development of potential mineral resources would be foregone throughout the 110,000 acre WSA. This would be a significant impact since development of a mine would be precluded.	The 91,170 acres designated as wilderness has no known economic potential. The 18,830 acre non-wilderness portion would be open for development. There would be no significant impacts.	The 61,240 acres designated as wilderness has no known economic potential. The 48,760 acre non-wilderness portion would be open for development. There would be no significant impacts.	Exploration and development could occur within the entire WSA. There would be no impacts on mineral resource development.
Recreational ORV Use	There would be 100 visitor days of ORV use eliminated in the wilderness portion of the WSA. Impacts on recreational ORV use would be negligible since the use would be absorbed on other public lands.	Recreational ORV use and 750 visitor days annually would be foregone annually. Impacts would be marginal since the use would be shifted to other public lands.	Recreational ORV use would decrease by 400 visitor days annually. Impacts would be negligible since the use would be shifted to other public lands.	The wilderness portion of the WSA receives almost no ORV use. Impacts on recreational ORV use would be negligible.	Use would increase to visitor days over the long term. There would be no impacts on recreational ORV use.
Cultural Resources	All proposed excavations would occur. There would be no impacts on cultural resource management activities.	Large scale professional excavations would be foregone. This would be a significant impact on study and interpretation of cultural resources.	Large scale professional excavations would be foregone. This would be a significant impact on study and interpretation of cultural resources.	Large scale excavations would be partially completed. Loss of knowledge on non-excavated sites would moderately reduce study and interpretation of cultural resources.	All proposed excavations would occur. There would be no impacts.
Fuelwood Harvest	Juniper areas would be open for harvest. There would be no impacts fuelwood harvest.	Fuelwood harvest of 100 cords annually would be foregone. This would be a moderate impact to local woodcutters.	Juniper areas would be open for harvest. There would be no impacts.	Juniper areas would be open for harvest. There would be no impacts.	Juniper areas would be open for harvest. There would be no impacts.

Alternatives

Chapter 3

Affected Environment

CHAPTER 3

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

This chapter briefly described each WSA and the resources that could be affected by the Proposed Action and alternatives.

The Barringer Report provides information on minerals for all the WSAs in this study except for the Tunnison Mountain, Five Springs, Skedaddle Mountain, and Dry Valley Rim WSAs. For these WSAs, minerals information is based on historic mining activity and visible evidence of mineral occurrence. The Barringer Report provides the basis for the information on where mineralization may logically be expected to occur for the remaining 9 WSAs.

More detailed descriptions of the resources in the study area and the regional socioeconomic conditions may be found in the planning documents for the area. Copies of these documents may be reviewed in the Susanville District Office and the Eagle Lake and Surprise Resource Area Offices.

TUNNISON MOUNTAIN
WSA CA-020-311

WILDERNESS

Size and General Status

WSA CA-02-311, Tunnison Mountain is located in Lassen County, California approximately 7 air miles northeast of Susanville. The entire unit lies within BLM's Willow Creek Planning Unit of the Eagle Lake Resource Area, Susanville District.

The unit contains 20,650 acres of public land which surrounds 530 acres of private land located in 13 parcels varying in size from 10 to 160 acres.

Boundaries vary from major roads to minor roads to private lands. The north boundary is the Horse Lake Road; on the east the Pete's Valley-Mapes Spring Road and non-public land form the boundary; the west boundary is non-public land, the Horse Lake Road and a 4 mile loop road east of the Horse Lake Road; the south boundary is non-public lands, an unnamed road that traverses northwest through sections 10 and 14, T.31N., R.13E. and the northern edge of an unnatural logged area immediately south of Willow Creek.

Naturalness

The BLMs Intensive Inventory determined that the WSA met the minimum standards for naturalness. Naturalness for a wilderness study means that the WSA "generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable". (Wilderness Act of 1964.) In this WSA the imprint of man's work is related to facilities to support livestock grazing and access roads and ways for construction and maintenance of the facilities, as well as for hunting and fishing access.

There are 7 miles of cherrystem roads adjacent to, and 4¼ miles of ways within the WSA. The majority of the road mileage occurs on the Long Canyon Road that

Photo 1 - Tunnison Mountain WSA

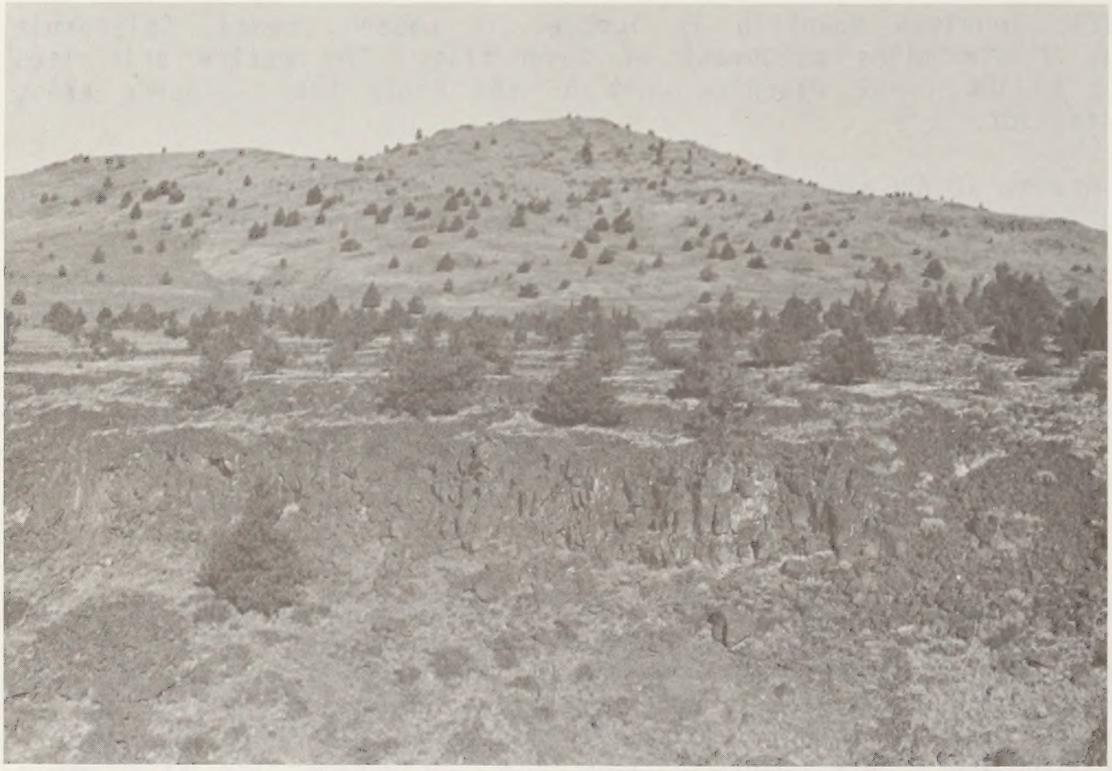


Photo 2 - Tunnison Mountain WSA

extends through the middle of the WSA and nearly splits it in half. The eastern .9 mile segment of this road was classified as a way during the inventory phase. This cherrystem road is only visible from within the canyon and does not effect other areas. A cherrystem road and way extending from the southern boundary northeast to "The Crossing" on Willow Creek makes up the balance of the road mileage and part of the way mileage. This road provides opportunities for cross country access to adjacent lands and thus adversely impacts naturalness and opportunities for solitude in these areas.

Other ways consist of short spurs off boundary roads and off the two roads just mentioned. The facilities to support livestock grazing include 9 reservoirs, 2 developed springs and 8 miles of fence. All of these projects were judged to be of very low profile and hence of low impact to naturalness.

Solitude

The WSA's approximate size 3½ miles by 10 miles, its topography - primarily two north south mountain ridges, 2 canyons and low rolling hills and its vegetation - mostly sage/grassland limit high quality opportunities for solitude throughout the WSA.

Opportunities for solitude due to topographic relief are excellent within Long Canyon between Horse Lake and Tunnison Mountain and within Willow Creek Canyon. However, like any linear corridor that attracts users because of its amenities these areas are subject to higher concentrations of users.

Fall hunting for upland game causes an influx of hunters which reduces opportunities for solitude primarily on weekends.

Primitive and Unconfined Type Recreation

The WSA offers opportunities for primitive and unconfined type recreation. These activities include hiking, backpacking, nature study, and fishing. Available water would require treatment for human use.

Willow Creek Canyon is the primary attraction for these activities. The above activities and horseback riding are also possible throughout the unit, however. Distinctive features of interest are primarily the ridges, small canyons, and stringer meadows scattered throughout the WSA.

Wildlife observation opportunities are good along the eastern lower slopes where a variety of species (see Wildlife section) congregate at different times of the year.

Special Features

Willow Creek Canyon is the most distinctive physical feature in the WSA. It contains high scenic values, archeological resources, a moderate quality trout fishery and diverse riparian vegetation in some areas.

TOPOGRAPHY AND VEGETATION

The WSA is approximately 3½ miles wide by 10 miles long. Three topographic features dominate the WSA: Horse Lake Mountain a 5½ mile long north-south ridge in the northern half of the WSA, Tunnison Mountain, a 4½ mile long

northwest-southeast ridge in the southern half of the WSA and Willow Creek Canyon, a 50' to 200' deep canyon that flows 6¼ miles west to east through the WSA. Both Horse Lake and Tunnison Mountain are relatively narrow (1 to 3 miles wide) with numerous small peaks along their ridge crests. The almost continuous chain of mountain peaks has numerous drainages of various widths and depths radiating from it. Most of the drainages flow into Willow Creek. Many small springs seep from the lower south and east slopes of Horse Lake Mountain. Numerous stringer meadows are located around and below these springs.

Willow Creek is a perennial stream that bisects the southern edge of the WSA. The stream forms a shallow wooded canyon on the western edge of the WSA and gradually cuts deeper into the lava terrain as it flows east. The eastern three miles of Willow Creek forms a winding "U" shaped canyon 100 to 200 feet deep in a dry sage/grassland area. Willow Creek's riparian vegetation is in fair to good condition above the confluence with Pete's Creek where a juniper pine woodland exists. Below the confluence, condition is fair to poor. Willow Creek Canyon contains one of the higher quality perennial streams throughout the region and is the most distinctive physical feature in the WSA.

In most of the WSA located north of Willow Creek plant life is mostly bunch grasses, annual grasses, sagebrush, scattered juniper and isolated patches of mountain mahogany at the higher elevations. Along Willow Creek riparian vegetation includes sedges, grasses and occasional willows. Scattered ponderosa pine and juniper also grow within the segment of Willow Creek Canyon above Pete's Creek as well as throughout the area between Willow Creek and the WSA's southern boundary. No threatened or endangered plant species occur within the WSA.

WILDLIFE AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

The WSA provides habitat for a typical cross section of the Great Basin wildlife. Special wildlife features within the WSA include sage grouse strutting grounds along the WSA's lower east slopes near Pete's Creek; deer winter range along the WSA's lower east slopes, critical deer winter range throughout most the WSA's southern end inclusive of all of Willow Creek; pronghorn winter range along the WSA's lower east slopes; critical pronghorn winter range around the confluence of Pete's Creek and Willow Creek and in the area to the south of the confluence; pronghorn migration corridors along the WSA's lower southwestern, eastern and southeastern slopes; quail habitat along Willow and Pete's Creeks and chukar habitat throughout the WSA's eastern half north of Willow Creek; occasional sightings of bald and golden eagles.

Willow Creek extends for 6¼ miles through the WSA. Stream surveys conducted on Willow Creek in 1980 indicate that the creek supports a sport fishery, primarily Brown Trout. Productivity is low due to limiting spawning habitat, however, trophy size fish do occur in this stream segment. Fishing pressure is limited to fishermen dedicated to spending several hours/fish caught.

The major problem in Willow Creek is reduced riparian stream cover, the result of historic beaver use and subsequent utilization by livestock. The reduced cover results in:

- extreme summer maximum water temperatures (as high as 28 degrees centigrade).
- a relatively high percentage of eroding banks (over 25% of stream banks).
- less than 10 percent stream bank cover.

No wildlife facilities exist within the WSA. However, as a result of the Willow Creek Planning Unit land use decision, 1981, 4½ miles of fence along Willow Creek are proposed to improve riparian vegetation, the wildlife habitat and the fishery. The fencing will exclude livestock from the creek except for limited watering access at 7 locations.

No threatened or endangered animal species occur within the WSA.

VISUAL RESOURCES

The WSA includes A, B and C quality scenery based on the BLM visual quality rating system. "A" quality scenery is limited to the narrow Willow Creek Canyon upstream of Pete's Creek. Willow Creek Canyon between Willow Creek Valley and Pete's Creek is a low rimmed canyon filled with statuesque pines in the upper canyon and scattered juniper throughout the lower canyon. Year round stream flow supports a rich growth of sedges and grasses along portions of the stream banks. The combination of varied vegetation, angular to curvilinear topography, and year round stream flow results in an "A" quality scenery rating for this portion of Willow Creek Canyon. Willow Creek Canyon from the confluence of Pete's Creek to the WSA's southern boundary is ranked as high quality "B" scenery. Although the canyon is deeper and wider in this section, lack of distinct color, vegetation variation and a decreased influence of stream flow on canyon character creates the "B" rating for the canyon section.

Other "B" quality areas are the pines and juniper woodlands north and south of Willow Creek Canyon. The balance of the WSA is rated C quality scenery. The landforms are very similar to the dominant landforms in the surrounding regions. There is little variation in the sage, grass, and scattered juniper stands that dominate the "C" areas resulting in a monotone of color and texture.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Based on a 5%, Class II Survey, conducted throughout the Willow Creek Planning Unit in 1981 and based on published references and local knowledge the following existing and potential archaeological resources have been identified: Willow Creek Canyon - numerous petroglyph panels, caves and habitation sites, many of national register (NR) quality; WSA from Long Canyon North - 1 NR site located, moderate potential for location of additional NR quality sites due to springs and water courses. Protective fencing is proposed in areas of Willow Creek Canyon to protect cultural resources.

WATER RESOURCES

Perennial water is located at numerous springs that form stringer meadows along the WSA'a lower east slopes north of Long Canyon. Very low perennial flows occur in lower Long Canyon and Pete's Creek. Willow Creek maintains a minimum summer flow of at least 16 cfs with higher flows during wet years.

Nine reservoirs and 2 developed springs are scattered along the WSA's eastern side and in Long Canyon. There is a need for additional livestock waters although no specific sites have been identified.

MINERALS AND ENERGY

Leasable Minerals

The potential for oil and gas in the WSA is unknown. No leases for oil and gas occur within the WSA. The entire WSA area is considered prospectively valuable for geothermal. However, no interest has been shown in leasing the area and no test drilling has occurred.

Locatable Minerals

The WSA has no history or visible evidence of activities with respect to locatable minerals. No claims exist in the WSA.

Salable Minerals

The potential for commercial quantities of salable minerals (i.e. sand, gravel, and flat rock) is low. Historically there has been very little user demand for salable minerals within the WSA.

Utility Corridors

The southern portion of the WSA south of The Crossing access road and way is within a potential Trans Sierra utility corridor alignment. Regional planning by Sierra Pacific Power Company has identified this alignment as a high priority route.

LIVESTOCK GRAZING

Grazing Use

Portions of two grazing allotments fall within the boundaries of the WSA. Portions of the South Horse Lake Allotment within the WSA comprises approximately 40% of the allotment (1,216 AUMs). Portions of the Johnston Allotment comprises 30% of the allotment (71 AUMs). Both allotments are used in spring and summer by the cattle.

Range Development (existing/proposed)

Reservoirs	Springs	Wells	Fences (miles)
9/2	2/0	0/0	5¼/12

These facilities will be developed in conformance with BLM's Wilderness Interim Management or Brown Book Policy. Maintenance will be required on the existing springs and reservoirs in Long Canyon in the next 4 to 5-years. Other existing water facilities will require periodic maintenance as needed.

WILD HORSES AND BURROS

No wild horses and burros utilize the WSA.

RECREATION

Hunting, fishing and hiking are the primary recreational uses of the WSA. Most popular species hunted are dove, quail, chukar and rabbits. Limited hunting of deer, antelope and sage grouse also occurs. Total visitor use in the WSA is estimated to be approximately 2,400 visitor days annually. Upland game hunting accounts for the majority of visitor days. Recreational ORV use is approximately 600 visitor days annually.

The WSA lies within deer hunting zone X5a, a quota hunt area where 300 permits are issued unit wide. Antelope hunting is also on a limited quota system in the WSA. Spot kill maps indicate an average kill of 5 deer and 1 antelope per year in the WSA.

Fishing use of Willow Creek is approximately 300 visitor days per year. Present habitat conditions have created a low productivity fishery but efforts are planned to improve habitat conditions (see wildlife section). Most fishing use occurs above the confluence with Pete's Creek where fair to good condition riparian habitat provides better stream conditions for fishing.

Willow Creek Canyon is the primary hiking area in the WSA with day hikes most common. Popular access points are at the Sheep Bridge, T.30N., R.13E., Sec. 4 and the Petroglyphs, T.30N., R.14E., Sec. 7 SW¼SW¼. Both fishing and hiking use occur primarily from local residents.

Recreational ORV use is limited to four wheel drives used in support of hunting and fishing access. Most use occurs on existing roads and ways.

LANDS AND REALTY

Private inholdings within the WSA completely surrounded by public land total 530 acres in 13 parcels owned by 9 landowners. Only 1 landowner is a livestock permittee. A 1 mile telephoneline is located along the northwestern boundary of the WSA within ¼ mile of the boundary adjacent to the Horse Lake Road.

One proposed utility corridor route also passes through the WSA's southern end on an east-west axis. This alignment is one of six preliminary alternative routes under consideration for completion of a Trans Sierra utility corridor. Only one alignment will eventually be selected. Of the six alternative corridors under consideration, only 2 pass through WSA's under study in this EIS. A further explanation of the corridors is contained in the general information section of Chapter III.

FIVE SPRINGS
WSA CA-020-609

WILDERNESS

Size and General Status

WSA CA-020-609 is located primarily in Lassen County, California with a small portion in Washoe County, Nevada and is approximately 28 air miles east-northeast of Susanville. The entire unit lies within BLM's Cal-Neva Planning Unit of the Eagle Lake Resource Area, Susanville, District.

Photo 3 - Five Springs WSA

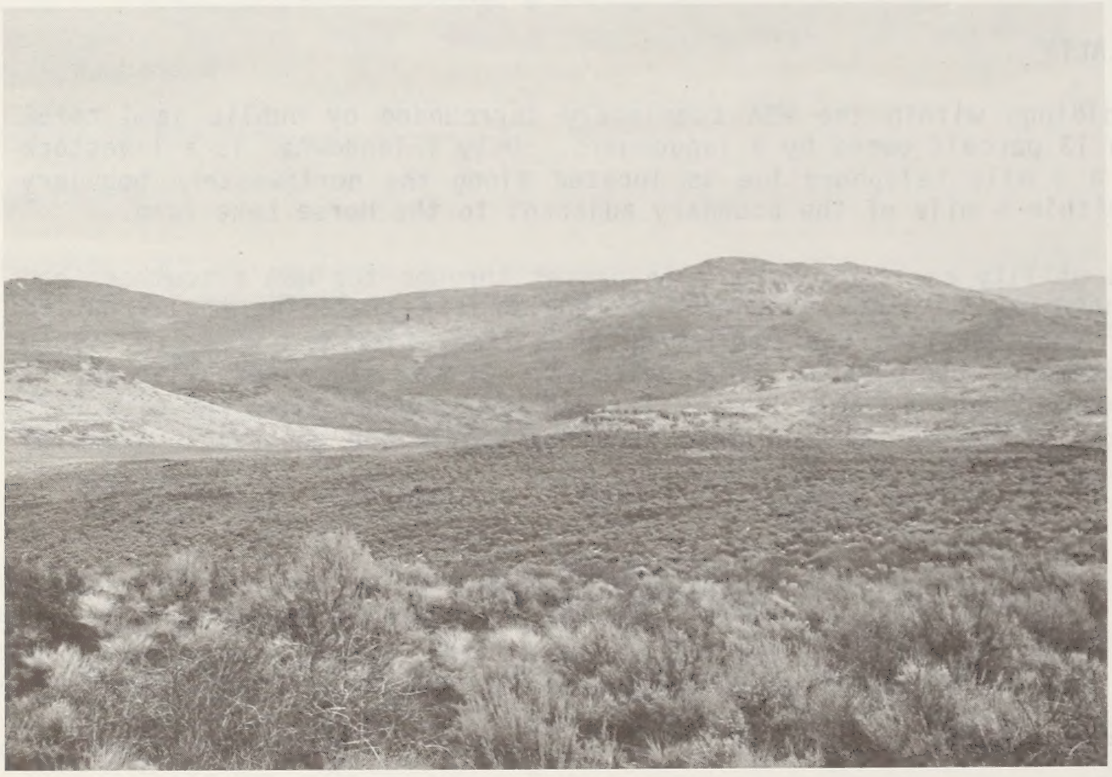


Photo 4 - Five Springs WSA

This unit encompasses approximately 48,460 acres of national resource land (1,300 acquired since December 1979, inventory via state land exchange); 520 acres of private land in 7 parcels and 640 acres of state land in 1 parcel within the boundaries. A major portion of the southeastern boundary is delineated by a service road for an underground telephone cable, and the Smoke Creek Ranch Road marks the balance of the southern boundary. An access road along the base of Five Springs Mountain constitutes the southwestern boundary, the Shinn Ranch to Stony Creek Road constitutes the northwestern boundary. The northern boundary is at the base of Rush Creek Mountain on an existing road, and the northeastern boundary is a road that travels along the base of Cherry Mountain roughly parallel to Smoke Creek. Privately owned lands mark the eastern boundary, which roughly follows a rocky escarpment with an irrigated meadow at the base. The extreme southeastern tip lies in Nevada.

A 5 mile common boundary with Twin Peaks WSA (CA-020-619A) is located along portions of Five Springs WSA's northeast boundary road. A 5 mile common boundary with Dry Valley Rim WSA (CA-020-615) is located along Five Springs WSA's southeast boundary road.

Naturalness

In this WSA the imprint of man's work is related to facilities to support livestock grazing and access roads and ways for construction and maintenance of the facilities as well as for hunting.

Areas along the periphery of the WSA have received impact from man's activities primarily in the form of short vehicle roads and ways, scattered reservoirs and spring developments. The interior of the WSA is natural appearing.

There are 6 miles of cherrystem roads and 15 miles of ways within the WSA. Private inholdings span some of the access routes. However, most routes are completely on public land. Most of the ways within the WSA receive use only by light vehicles during hunting season and thus are two wheel tracks through the sagebrush. This makes the ways of relatively low impact on the naturalness. However, the level of use, although relatively low, has been consistent. Therefore, the ways are being maintained in their present condition and are not reverting back to a natural state. The 4 cherrystem roads, while not technically within the WSA must be considered with respect to solitude. The roads penetrate the WSA from the southeast and west boundaries and extend from 1 to 2 miles into the WSA's lower slopes. Although the roads visual impact is low they provide access to open country along their routes affording many opportunities for unregulated cross country vehicle travel that can alter naturalness through rutting and vegetation damage.

Solitude

The unit's varied terrain and size provide opportunities for solitude. Three ridge like mountains and two primary drainages 5 to 6 miles long as well a numerous short drainages of 1 to 4 miles provide sufficient variation in terrain to isolate visitors one from another.

The adjacent areas to the northeast, east and southeast are partially or totally in WSA status. Intervening roads or private land separate each WSA but vehicle use of these roads is light (less than 8 vehicles per day).

During fall hunting season however, upland game hunter use of the Smoke Creek Ranch Road increases to over 100 vehicles/day on weekends and then drops to lower levels during the week. Traffic on other boundary roads also increases during this time but not to as great an extent. Cross country vehicle use occurs throughout much of the WSA during the hunting season. When vehicle traffic on adjacent roads occurs it is evident from the WSA's southern slopes, however, most of the WSA is beyond the outside sights and sounds of human activity. Areas to the southwest and west are non-WSA areas used for livestock grazing and agriculture. Evidence of human activity outside the WSA varies from unaltered landscapes to irrigated fields and farm machinery.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined type recreation exist throughout the WSA. Distinctive destination type features are isolated springs and associated riparian areas, broad ridges and canyons, all common throughout the surrounding region. Activities that occur are hiking, wildlife observation, nature study and archeological sightseeing. Available water would require treatment for human use.

Special Features

Special features within the unit include a concentration of national register archeological sites on the unit's southwestern flank and moderate to high potential for location of other national register quality sites near natural water areas throughout the WSA.

TOPOGRAPHY AND VEGETATION

The WSA is on the western edge of the arid Great Basin characterized by eroded volcanic mountains. Five Springs Mountain, Cherry Mountain and Rush Creek Mountain are located within the unit. The mountainous unit is best described as a gently to moderately steep undulating landscape without prominent landmarks. Stony and Rush Creeks are mostly perennial creeks originating within the unit. During drought years Rush Creek usually becomes dry while Stony Creek will run a little water. Riparian vegetation is dense in parts of Rush Creek and slight to moderately dense in Stony Creek. Other than willows in the two creek bottoms and at springs, vegetation throughout the WSA is limited to sagebrush and associated shrubs and grasses. Total relief in the unit is about 1,800 feet, extending from 4,500' to 6,300'. Numerous broad open canyons are cut into the three prominent ridges that make up the core of the relief in the WSA.

WILDLIFE AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

The WSA provides habitat for a typical cross section of Great Basin wildlife. Special wildlife features include deer winter range along the WSA's lower slopes, deer fawning areas in the central portion of the WSA, pronghorn range around the lower slopes of the WSA and kidding areas in two small sections of the WSA on the south and west edges, fair to good chukar and quail habitat throughout the WSA and potential nesting sites for prairie falcons and golden eagles. No wildlife oriented facilities exist in the WSA.

There is one known population of Scutellaria holmgreniorum, a California Native Plant Society List No. 2 plant on the west side of the unit. The 20 acres of habitat on the western boundary of the WSA is part of a 2,000 acre habitat area existing outside the WSA. BLM is mandated to manage for the protection of these plants whenever possible. The known population is very small in size but further search would probably reveal more populations in the area.

VISUAL RESOURCES

The WSA is considered C quality scenery on the BLM visual quality rating system. The scenic rating is based on the WSA's rolling slopes, similarity of land forms and color and the lack of any unique physical features. Rush Creek and Stony Creek are the most varied visual features within the WSA. However, they do not add significantly to the unit's overall visual quality to affect the rating.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

A seven percent random stratified sample was completed for the entire Cal-Neva Planning Unit as part of the Cal-Neva EIS. In addition, clearances, especially for range seeding projects, have increased the total area surveyed to 13%. Estimates of the WSA's archaeological resources are based on this information as well as limited site specific surveys conducted in response BLM project clearances and archaeological research.

Fourteen national register quality sites have been located within the WSA. All of these are located on the WSA's southwest flank and are assumed to exist in conjunction with other sites adjacent to but outside the WSA in the Deep Cut National Register Archaeological District. Sites within the WSA include petroglyph panels, village sites and milling stations. The WSA is considered to have moderate to high potential to yield additional archaeological sites.

WATER RESOURCES

Perennial water is located in Rush Creek and Stony Creek and in the springs scattered along the south half of the WSA. Nine of these springs are developed. Fourteen small livestock reservoirs are located around the WSA's southeast, southwest, northern and north central periphery.

MINERALS AND ENERGY

Leasable Minerals

There were three leases covering 9,225 acres for oil and gas in the WSA which have been dropped. The potential for oil and gas is unknown. The WSA is not considered valuable for geothermal or sodium.

Locatable Minerals

The WSA has no history or visible evidence of activities with respect to locatable minerals.

Saleable Minerals

There has been no known development of saleable minerals in the WSA.

Energy

One proposed utility corridor route passes through the WSA on a southeast northwest axis along the southern boundary of the WSA. This alignment is considered a high priority route by utility industry planners. However, corridor development is in the preliminary planning stages and the feasibility of eventual development through the WSA is unknown at this time.

LIVESTOCK GRAZING

Grazing Use

Portions of two grazing allotments fall within the boundaries of the WSA. The Deep Cut Allotment portion comprises approximately 19% of the allotment or 521 AUMs in the WSA. The Observation Allotment portion comprises approximately 26% of the allotment or 2,970 AUMs in the WSA. The Deep Cut Allotment has cattle and is used from March to December. The Observation Allotment is for cattle and sheep and is used from April to October.

Range Development (existing/proposed)

Reservoirs	Springs	Wells	Fences (miles)
14/1	9/0	0/0	7.5/7

Reservoir developments are located around the lower slopes of Rush Creek Mountain and Five Springs Mountain. Spring developments are located primarily on the southeastern part of the unit on the lower slopes of Five Springs and Cherry Mountains.

WILD HORSES AND BURROS

The WSA comprises approximately 8% of the Twin Peaks herd management area. Herd size recommended in the Cal-Neva MFP is 600-850 horses and 75-110 burros. Management levels for the WSA portion of the herd management area has not been determined at this time. Very few burros occur in the WSA. Maintenance of the horse and burro herds at management levels will require periodic gathering. BLM has gathered surplus horses and burros from this area since 1976 using helicopter gathering techniques, portable corrals and tractor trailer transport of gathered horses from the trap site. Past trapping locations have been just outside the WSA at the Clark trap (T.31N., R.16E., Sec. 6 SW¼NW¼).

RECREATION

Hunting is the only regular public recreational use of the WSA. The area is very popular for fall chukar and quail hunting. Limited deer and antelope hunting also occur in the WSA. Rabbit hunting occurs on the WSA's lower southern slopes near the Smoke Creek Road. Total visitor use for the WSA is estimated at approximately 5,700 visitor days/year with hunting accounting for the majority of use. Recreational ORV use is approximately 5,600 visitor days annually.

Affected Environment

Off-road vehicle use occurs primarily in support of hunting and consists of 4 wheel drive use of existing ways and a moderate amount of cross country travel up drainages to access popular hunting areas. Occasional motorcycle trail riding occurs through the WSA on primitive trails. No rockhounding of any significance occurs in the WSA.

LANDS AND REALTY

Private inholdings within and completely surrounded by public land total 520 acres in 7 parcels owned by 3 private landowners. State of California land totals 640 acres in one parcel. Parcel sizes range from 40 to 640 acres. Two parcels are accessed by an existing way and one parcel is accessed by a cherry-stem road. Two of the private owners are active livestock permittees within the WSA and one has had all grazing privileges revoked. Livestock grazing is the only use of the private and state land. No developments exist on these inholdings.

A proposed utility corridor route also passes through the WSA on a southwest-northeast axis following the present alignment of the trans continental telephone cable along the southeast side of the WSA. This alignment is one of six preliminary alternative routes under consideration for completion of a Trans Sierra utility corridor. Only one alignment will eventually be selected. Of the six alternative corridors under consideration, only 2 pass through WSA's under study in this EIS.

SKEDADDLE MOUNTAIN
WSA CA-020-612

WILDERNESS

Size and General Status

WSA CA-020-612 is primarily located in Lassen County, California with a very small portion in Washoe County, Nevada. The WSA is approximately 30 air miles east of Susanville and lies entirely within the Cal-Neva Planning Unit of the Eagle Lake Resource Area, Susanville District.

The unit contains 63,790 acres of public land (2,830 acres acquired since December 1979 via State Land Exchange) and 1,200 acres of private land located in 7 tracts varying in size from 40 to 640 acres. The unit is bounded on the west by the Bruebeck Spring Road, private land, and County Road 320; on the south by the section line extending east-west south of T.28N., R.16E., sections 1, 2, 3, 4, and T.28N., R.17E., section 6, then around 1¼ miles of the west boundary and 2 miles of the north boundary of the Sierra Army Depot's demolition site withdrawal; on the east by the Skedaddle Road and on the north by the Humbolt Wagon Road. A 15 mile common boundary with Dry Valley Rim WSA (CA-020-615) occurs along the Skedaddle WSA's east boundary road.

Naturalness

In this WSA the imprint of man's work is related to facilities to support livestock grazing, and ways used for sheepherding activities, allotment inspection, as well as by hunters and sightseers. Areas without the influence of

Photo 5 - Skedaddle Mountain WSA

Photo 6 - Skedaddle Mountain WSA

man evident are located in the higher rugged canyons and ridges of the Amedee and Skedaddle Mountains and along the Wendel Cliffs.

The WSA appears natural but has evidence of man scattered throughout the WSA in the form of range water developments (15 developed springs and 31 reservoirs and 6 miles of fence) located along the northern and eastern sides of the Skedaddle Mountains and in the Skedaddle Creek and Spencer Creek drainages. Vegetation around the water developments are impacted by livestock and wildlife use creating small unnatural appearing areas. However, natural revegetation of the reservoir earthen dams and the location of the structures within drainages helps to reduce their overall adverse impact on naturalness.

Detonation of ammunition at the Sierra Army Depot's demolition facility on the southern flank of the Amedee Mountains causes sound and smoke cloud drifts that affect naturalness within the WSA. The extent of the impacts depend upon the wind direction, type of ammunition detonated and frequency of detonation (usually single to multiple detonations within a 1 hour period in mid-afternoon). Prevailing westerly winds usually carry the majority of cloud drifts east of the WSA, but drift of dissipating clouds over the WSA does occur.

There are 15 miles of cherrystem roads and 47 miles of ways within the WSA. These access routes are concentrated in the following areas: Spencer Basin, eastern drainages of Skedaddle Mountain, Skedaddle Creek and tributaries, north slope drainages with developed springs and reservoirs, and portions of Wendel Canyon. The majority of cherrystem roads and ways access livestock water developments and penetrate into the WSA from 1 to 6 miles. Of the 47 miles of ways, 22 would be difficult to close at present WSA boundaries due to open terrain. The ways receive only light use by light trucks and thus are two wheel tracks through the sagebrush. Most of the ways are of low impact to the natural character of the WSA because of screening provided by adjacent brush and by their canyon bottom locations that afford screening by adjacent ridges. However, they are maintained by the passage of vehicles and are not reverting back to a natural condition.

Solitude

Portions of the WSA offer outstanding opportunities for solitude due to their isolated location within the rugged mountainous land mass of the WSA. These areas are Spencer and Little Spencer Basin, Wendel Canyon's North, Middle and South Forks, unnamed canyons that penetrate Wendel Cliffs, James and Amedee Canyons, Skedaddle Creek Canyons, Spencer Creek Canyon, and the numerous unnamed canyons on the eastern and northern slopes of the WSA. These areas are isolated from outside influences and provide excellent opportunities for experiencing solitude in a scenic rugged mountainous setting.

Adverse impacts to solitude occur within the WSA during the fall hunting season with the influx of motorized vehicles used by hunters for access. Motorized vehicle use occurs primarily around the WSA's lower northern and eastern slopes and within the canyons of Skedaddle Creek and Spencer Creek. Vehicle use associated with hunting also occurs on the cherrystem road and way to the mouth of Wendel Canyon. Hunting occurs throughout most of the WSA and reduces the opportunity for solitude during the most heavily used period

following the opening of Chukar season. Livestock operators are the only other regular users of the WSA and their activities do little to adversely impact solitude.

Other adverse impacts to solitude result from vehicle use and occasional to frequent aircraft landing and take off at the Sierra Army Depot located 2 to 5 miles south of the WSA; and detonation of ammunition at the Sierra Army Depot's demolition area on the southern flank of the Amedee Mountains. The demolition activities vary from occasional to multiple daily detonations that usually occur during a 1 hour period in the afternoon. Sound impacts are loud but brief and vary depending upon one's location within the WSA. Total sound is very loud on the southern half of the WSA but is less in Spencer Basin and on the northern half of the WSA due to the shielding of the Amedee and Skedaddle Ridges. Visual evidence of lingering smoke clouds from the explosions vary depending upon winds.. Effect on the WSA is temporary.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined type recreation exist throughout the WSA. Activities that occur are hiking, horseback riding, wildlife observation, and nature study. Many steep and narrow canyons provide excellent opportunities for exploration and challenging hiking. The WSA's many other canyons, ridges and peaks also afford good destination type attractions for both day trips and overnight outings. Available water would require treatment for human use.

Special Features

Physical relief and birds of prey (raptors) are the major distinctive feature of the WSA. The 2,200' Wendel Cliffs form the very pronounced south-western face of the WSA. Wendel Canyon's three forks disect the northern end of the cliff area. Eroded volcanic rocks of the cliffs form numerous cavities and spires. All of these areas consist of steep cliffs and rugged rocky slopes. The Skedaddle Mountain ridgecrest and its southern face also forms steep relief in the WSA. Numerous canyons occur throughout the WSA, particularly along the Amedee Mountains. Scenic quality is high in the more rugged areas of the WSA. Extensive vistas of three major geologic provinces, the Great Basin, the Sierra Nevada and the Modoc Plateau are all possible from throughout the WSA.

The WSA contains a high density of seasonally nesting raptors including golden eagles, prairie falcons, red tail hawks, long eared owls and great horned owls. Golden eagle nesting density is among the highest throughout the region.

TOPOGRAPHY AND VEGETATION

The WSA is on the western edge of the Great Basin characterized by eroded volcanic mountains and expansive desert valleys, the remains of ancient lake beds. The WSA is dominated by the Skedaddle and Amedee Mountains located within the central and southern parts of the WSA. These peaks rise from adjacent dry lake beds and low sloping hills at 4,200' to the summit of the Skedaddles at 7,680'.

The north, south, and east edges of the WSA are open, sagebrush covered flats that develop into long toe slopes of the Skedaddles or shorter toe slopes of the Amedees, along with associated drainages and hills. The core area is dominated by rugged vertical cliffs, canyons, peaks, and basins of the Skedaddle and Amedee Mountains. The high Skedaddle elevations support scattered aspen groves and patches of large berry shrubs. The deep canyons support riparian vegetation (willows, wild rose, berry shrubs) and the basins, small grass meadows. However, sagebrush and bunch grass vegetation dominate the majority of the unit. No threatened or endangered plants occur within the WSA.

WILDLIFE AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

The WSA provides habitat for a typical cross section of the Great Basin wildlife. Wildlife features within the WSA include the following: sage grouse strutting grounds on the WSA's lower southeast, east and northeast slopes; pronghorn range on the lower north and east slopes as well as up Spencer Creek; pronghorn winter range along the lower east slopes and up Spencer Creek; pronghorn kidding areas in Spencer Basin and in the northwestern corner of the WSA; deer range throughout all but the WSA's north western corner, deer winter range on portions of the WSA's lower eastern and northeastern slopes, deer fawning areas throughout the mid to higher elevations of the Skedaddle's north and northeast slopes.

Other special features include numerous raptor nesting sites on the many cliffs in the unit especially in Wendel Canyon and on Wendel Cliffs. Raptors commonly nesting in the WSA include prairie falcons, golden eagles, red tail hawks, great horned owls and long eared owls.

Three wildlife guzzlers are located in the WSA. Six additional wildlife guzzler developments are planned within the WSA.

The area has been studied for reintroduction of big horn sheep because it offers good habitat and cover. However, presently the WSA is considered minimally suitable because of disease transmitted by domestic sheep use of the area. Domestic sheep use is a grandfathered use in the WSA.

No threatened, endangered or sensitive animal species have been identified within the WSA.

VISUAL RESOURCES

The unit contains A, B and C quality scenery on the BLM visual quality rating system. Highest quality A scenery is located in areas of greatest relief, Wendel Cliffs, Wendel Canyon and the Skedaddle Mountain Peaks. B scenery includes the Amedee Peaks, Spencer Basin and the upper slopes of Skedaddle and Amedee Mountains. C quality scenery is located on the basal slopes around the periphery of the WSA on the east, south and west and comprises the majority of the WSA's northern area north of four developed springs, Antelope, Jenkins, Willow and Morgan.

Expansive vistas over Honey Lake, Honey Lake Valley and beyond to the Sierra escarpment and the volcanic peaks surrounding Honey Lake Valley are available

from throughout the higher elevations of the WSA. These contrasts of varied topographic relief outside and within the WSA add to the scenic quality of the area.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

A seven percent random stratified sample inventory was completed for the entire Cal Neva planning unit as part of the Cal Neva EIS. In addition, clearances, especially for range seeding projects, have increased the total area surveyed in the planning unit to 13%. Estimates of the WSA's archeological resources are based on this information as well as limited site specific surveys conducted in response to BLM project clearances and archeological research. Any area with natural year round water has very high potential for location of national register quality sites; moderate potential exists for location of national register quality quarry sites along all rims.

Seventeen national register quality sites have been located within the WSA. Site locations are scattered around the WSA's lower basal slopes and drainages. Moderate potential for location of additional sites exists along lower Spencer Creek and in two adjacent tributaries to the northeast, along the Skedaddle's northern drainages near spring and water courses and along the base of the Amedee Cliffs area. Sites include seasonal encampments, hunting blinds and village sites. Tommy Tucker Cave located at the base of Wendel Cliffs was inhabited by Paiutes within the past 100-years.

WATER RESOURCES

Perennial water is located in Skedaddle Creek and in scattered springs throughout the WSA. Nine parcels of private land within, and outside but adjacent to the WSA along cherrystem access roads in Skedaddle and Spencer Creek drainages contain springs. These constitute many of the most reliable springs within the WSA area. Similarly, a large meadow area along Skedaddle Creek in T.29N., R.17E., sections 2 and 3 occurs on private land outside the WSA and adjacent to cherrystem access roads that penetrate the WSA up Skedaddle Creek. Fifteen developed springs are located on public land within the WSA. Thirty one small reservoirs are also located throughout the WSA. Waters would require treatment for human use except where springs are not impacted by livestock.

MINERALS AND ENERGY

Leasable Minerals

The potential for oil and gas is unknown. Leases filed in the area in the past have been allowed to expire without exploration or development. Approximately 1,540 acres of the Wendel Known Geothermal Resource Area (KGRA) are located within the WSA. Most of the KGRA acreage, 1,040 acres, is located on steep inaccessible terrain on the Wendel cliffs portion of the Amedee Mountains. An additional 500 acres of the KGRA are also located on lower more accessible slopes in T 29N., R 16E., Sections 20 and 29. An area of approximately 21,540 acres located in the central and western half of the WSA is considered prospectively valuable for geothermal.

Rugged topography precludes on site development of the Wendel Cliff's resource. Off site drilling could occur, however, no interest has been shown in developing this portion of the KGRA at this time. Development of more level portions

of the KGRA outside the WSA is occurring. The portion of the KGRA in sections 20 and 29 T.29N. R.16E. is more gradual and could be more easily developed. The WSA is not considered valuable for sodium or potassium.

Locatable Minerals

Early mineral exploration consisting of small exploratory surface pits has occurred in the WSA. Areas of past activity include Spencer Basin and Little Spencer Basin, North Fork of Wendel Canyon and the southern slopes of the WSA. No development resulted from these early explorations.

Placer claims were located in May of 1985 along the northern boundary of the WSA. They are in Township 30N., Range 16E., in the NE¼ of Section 10 and the NW¼ of Section 11. Out of a total of 320 acres being claimed, approximately 200 acres are in the WSA.

An additional 7 placer claims totaling approximately 100 acres were previously located within the WSA in T.29N., R.16E., Sections 10 & 15. Commercial development of perlite was considered for these claims in 1977 but did not occur. A cherrystem access road exists to the claims. The last assessment filings occurred in 1983.

Salable Minerals

Commercial removal of sand and gravel has occurred along the southwest border of the WSA on the dry lake slopes above County Road 320. No recent use of this salable material has occurred. Potential for future use of this source appears low.

Energy

Two potential utility corridors pass through the WSA. A seven mile segment of one alignment is located on an east-west axis and extends across the northern end of the WSA, roughly following an existing underground telephone cable right-of-way. A ten mile segment of a second alignment passes along the eastern side of the WSA on a northwest-southeast axis. The northern alignment is considered a higher priority alignment (Sierra Pacific Power Company, May 15, 1984). The eastern alignment is considered low priority by the utility industry. Corridor development is in the preliminary planning stages and the feasibility of eventual development through the WSA is unknown at this time.

LIVESTOCK GRAZING

Grazing Use

The WSA provides 2,996 AUM's of livestock forage for portions of three allotments. The Twin Peaks Allotment portion of the WSA comprises 11% of the allotment or 1,787 AUMs in the WSA. The Deep Cut Allotment portion of the WSA comprises 25% of the allotment or 685 AUMs in the WSA. The Cal Winter Range Allotment portion of the WSA comprises 85% of the allotment or 524 AUMs. The Twin Peaks Allotment is for cattle and sheep and is in use from March through December. The Deep Cut Allotment is for cattle and is in use from April through October. The Cal Winter Range Allotment is for sheep and is in use from November to mid-April.

Range Developments (existing/proposed)

Reservoirs	Springs	Wells	Fences (miles)
31/1	15/0	0/1	6/0

Reservoirs and spring developments are located in four general areas within the WSA: Spencer Creek drainage, east side canyons, Skedaddle Creek and tributaries, north slope drainages. These areas cover the majority of the WSA. Cherrystem roads and ways access most water developments. Areas without water developments are: Skedaddle Mountain summit ridge, Little Spencer Basin, Upper Wendel Canyon and its tributaries, Wendel Cliffs and lower slopes, Amedee Mountains.

WILD HORSES AND BURROS

The WSA comprises approximately 15% of Twin Peaks Horse Use Area. Herd size recommended in the Cal-Neva MFP is 600-850 horses and 75-110 burros. Very few burros occur in the WSA. Management levels for the WSA portion of the horse use area has not been determined at this time. Once determined, maintenance of horse herd size at management levels will require periodic gathering. BLM has gathered surplus horses and burros from this area since 1976 using helicopter gathering techniques, portable corrals and tractor trailer transport of gathered horses from the trap site. Vehicle access is required for transport of portable corral panels to the trap site and removal of trapped animals.

Trap areas are selected based on a combination of herd location and suitable terrain. Past trap locations were near Wild Horse Reservoir ¼ mile inside the WSA in T.30N. R.17E. section 22 S½ and near Skedaddle Dam site, ¼ mile outside the WSA's eastern boundary in adjacent WSA CA-020-615.

RECREATION

Hunting is the major regular public use of the WSA although occasional hiking and horseback riding occurs. Hunter use within the WSA is estimated at 4,200 visitor days annual. This use is estimated among the species hunted as follows: 3,300 visitor days for upland game birds, 750 visitor days for rabbits, 150 visitor days for deer and 20 visitor days for antelope. Hiking use occurs in Wendel Canyon, the canyons of Wendel Cliffs, and on Skedaddle Mountain. Tommy Tucker Cave at the base of Wendel Cliffs also attracts occasional visitors who make the short 1/8 mile hike from the road to the cave. Total visitor
use in the WSA is estimated at 4,500 or more visitor days/year with hunter use accounting for approximately 4,200 of those visitor days.

Off-road vehicle use is approximately 4,200 visitor days and occurs primarily in support of hunting and consists of 4-wheel drive use of the existing 15 miles of roads, 47 miles of ways and cross country travel. The Lassen Motorcycle Club annually sponsors a 100 mile enduro ride that often starts just outside the WSA's southern boundary. The one day event usually draws 100 to 200 riders and an equal number of spectators. Race start and finish areas are located approximately 1 mile south of the WSA's southern boundary. Non-competitive trail riding occurs on the access ways of Spencer and Skedaddle Creeks, on the northern slope access ways and on a small undeveloped trail up Thousand Springs Canyon.

LANDS AND REALTY

Private inholdings total 1,200 acres in 7 parcels owned by three owners. Parcel sizes range from 40 to 640 acres. All but two inholdings are accessed by existing vehicle ways or roads across public land. The remaining two parcels are each ¼ mile away from existing ways. Two of the three inholding owners are livestock permittees who rely heavily on the WSA for grazing rights. Most inholdings have developed livestock water on them. Private waters are the most reliable water sources within the area encompassed by the WSA. Most private waters in the area are developed springs.

One desert land entry application is pending on an 80 acre parcel of public land on the western border of the WSA. The same parcel is included in a Bureau of Indian Affairs proposal to transfer public lands in the Wendel area to local Native Americans for commercial uses.

DRY VALLEY RIM
WSA CA-020-615

WILDERNESS

Size and General Status

The unit contains 95,025 acres of public land (1,820 acres added since the December 1979, inventory via State Land Exchange) and 520 acres of private land located in 8 tracts, varying in size from 40 to 160 acres. The unit is bounded on the east by the lower Smoke Creek Road, the Dry Valley Road and the Pipe Springs Road. The northern boundary is the Smoke Creek Ranch Road, the southern boundary the Wendel Road, and the western boundary the east-side Skedaddle Road. A 15 mile common boundary with Skedaddle WSA (CA-020-612) occurs along Dry Valley Rim WSA's west side boundary road. A 5 mile common boundary with Five Springs WSA (CA-020-609) occurs along Dry Valley Rim WSA's northwest boundary road.

Naturalness

The BLM's Intensive Inventory determined that the WSA met the minimum standards for naturalness. Naturalness for a wilderness study means that the WSA "generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable" (Wilderness Act of 1964). In this WSA the imprint of man's work is related to facilities to support livestock grazing and access roads and ways for construction and maintenance of the facilities as well as for hunting.

The majority of the unit appears natural in character. Ways and reservoirs are scattered about the area from the foothills of the steep wall along the east boundary to the road forming the west boundary. The majority of these developments are located in clusters in the northern, central and southern portions of the unit. Each cluster spans an area roughly four miles in diameter. The unit's rolling terrain and size screen most reservoirs from direct viewing from any one vantage point. A natural appearing environment with no evidence of man's presence characterizes the balance of the WSA's 94,000 acres.

Photo 7 - Dry Valley Rim WSA

Photo 8 - Dry Valley Rim WSA

Expansive vistas to the east overlook the Smoke Creek Desert. Vehicle dust trails can occasionally be seen, however, the very low volume of traffic makes this impact of little consequence to the experience of naturalness within the WSA.

Near daily detonation of surplus ammunition occurs at the Sierra Army Depot's demolition area on the southern flank of the Amedee Mountains, 2 miles west of the WSA's southern end. Explosions vary from 1 to 10 per day occurring within a 1 hour period, generally in the afternoons. Exceptions to this do occur. Dust and smoke clouds from the explosions usually drift east over the south end of the WSA. Adverse effects to naturalness within the southern end of the WSA vary from slight to moderate depending upon the cloud size and dispersal time.

There are 6 miles of cherrystem roads and 47 miles of ways penetrating the WSA. Private inholdings span some of the ways, however, physical access is not limited by private ownership. Most of the ways within the WSA receive use only by light vehicles during hunting season and thus, are two wheel tracks through the sagebrush. This makes the ways of relatively low impact on the naturalness. Although the level of use is relatively low, it has been consistent. Therefore, the ways are not reverting back to a natural state.

Solitude

Opportunities for solitude exist throughout the WSA. Although terrain is not highly varied, enough variation exists in combination with the unit's substantial size north-south (20 miles) and the steep relief which separates its east 1/3 from its west 2/3 to provide outstanding opportunities for solitude.

As discussed under naturalness outside sights and sounds do affect the WSA, particularly the southern four miles, adversely affecting opportunities for solitude in the southern end. Sound impacts are loud but brief and vary depending upon one's location with the WSA. Total sound is similar to, or less than, that of sonic booms that occasionally occur throughout the region. Expansive vistas to the east over the Smoke Creek Desert outside the WSA, enhance the feeling of isolation in the WSA without adding any significant adverse impacts to solitude within the WSA. Fall hunting for chukar creates an influx of hunters which access the unit via 4-wheel drive vehicles and on foot. Most use is concentrated on the eastern side of the WSA. Opportunities for solitude are reduced during this time.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation exist throughout the unit. The unit's rugged eastern 1/3 is of particular interest to persons seeking exploration in rugged canyon areas. Destination type features and challenging hiking opportunities are centered along Dry Valley Rim and its short steep canyons.

Special Features

Wildlife add special interest to the WSA. Large wintering herds of deer are common on the gradually sloping western flank of the WSA. Sagegrouse, chukar and antelope are also prevalent.

Dry Valley Rim is the most distinctive physical feature within the WSA and is unique among the other 5 WSA's in the area. The rim is a 17 mile north-south east facing fault block that rises up to 1,500 feet above adjacent terrain. The rim consists of black and brown layered volcanic rock highlighted by colorful green yellow and orange lichens. Birds of prey use the rim for nesting, particularly prairie falcons and golden eagles. Good opportunities for viewing birds of prey exist from atop the rim.

A three mile segment of the Noble's cut-off on the Lassen-Applegate Emigrant trail passes through the WSA just south of Smoke Creek near the WSA's north-eastern boundary. The wagon road was used by California emigrants from the 1850's to the 1860's and later as a wagon freighting route to the mines of Humbolt County, Nevada and Idaho. Remains of the old wagon road consist of parallel wheel tracks evident through the sagebrush. The most readily apparent trail segment is locâted in T.31N. R.18E. Section 26 NE¼, where the wagon road extends over a hill and is easily viewed from the Smoke Creek Road.

TOPOGRAPHY AND VEGETATION

Elevations within the unit vary from 3,800 to 6,200 feet. At the higher elevations there are flat topped mountains with steep and abrupt rimrock walls and rocky talus and sagebrush covered slopes. Preciptious, deep rimrock and talus canyons are common on the eastern 1/3 of the WSA whereas they become more shallow and smooth-flowing at the lower elevations. On the west slope of the WSA canyons are generally shallow and gradually sloping. Dry Valley Rim is a steep 1,000 to 1,500 foot rimrock wall located along the eastern side of the WSA. Between this rock wall which forms the dominant topographical limits of the unit and the eastern boundary road, is a distance of approximately ¼ mile to 3 miles. Lower slopes and a small ridge system characterize this area. The dominant vegetation throughout the unit is big and low sagebrush. Water is very limited in the southern half of the unit and in the northern half consists of developed springs and reservoirs. No threatened or endangered plant species occur within the WSA.

WILDLIFE AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

The WSA provides habitat for a typical cross section of Great Basin wildlife.

Special wildlife features include sage grouse strutting grounds in the western two-thirds of the WSA, deer winter range throughout the WSA, pronghorn winter range east of Dry Valley Rim, prairie falcon and golden eagle nesting sites on the WSA's prominent escarpment, Dry Valley Rim and good chukar habitat throughout the WSA's steep slope areas.

Six upland game guzzlers are located in the WSA and good potential exists for up to 5 more. Guzzler installation generally requires cross country motorized vehicle travel to the guzzler sites and minor 20' x 20' site disturbance for installation. Wilderness designation would restrict, but not prevent, motorized access for future wildlife improvements if they are needed to benefit wilderness values. Timing and method of installation would be planned to reduce impacts on solitude and naturalness.

No threatened or endangered animal species occur within the WSA.

VISUAL RESOURCES

The WSA includes both B and C quality scenery on the BLM visual quality rating system. B scenery is located along the unit's eastern side. The scenic rating is primarily based on the rugged 1,000 to 1,500 foot layered volcanic face of Dry Valley Rim, its many short steep canyons and the expansive vistas east over the Smoke Creek Desert. B scenery is also located on the unit's northern border along the canyon of Smoke Creek and Rush Creek. C quality scenery is located throughout the rest of the unit. This area consists of a north-south fault block uplifted on the east and sloping on the west to Skedaddle Creek. This long plain is disected by numerous small canyons and low ridges. The gently rolling topography provides slightly varied land forms. However, a similarity of color and form do not make the area particularly distinctive.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

A seven percent random stratified sample inventory was completed for the entire Cal Neva Planning Unit as part of the Cal Neva EIS. In addition, clearances, especially for range projects, have increased the total area surveyed in the planning unit to 13%. Estimates of the WSA's archaeological resources are based on this information as well as limited site specific surveys conducted in response to BLM project clearances and archaeological research.

Any area with natural year round water has very high potential for location of national register quality sites. Moderate potential exists for location on national register quality quarry sites along all rims.

Two national register quality sites have been located in the WSA with potential for many more. A 1983 excavation of a burial cave located nearby but outside the WSA, in an area physically similar to the Dry Valley Rim escarpment, provided valuable new information about archaeological resources of the area. Highest potential for location of additional archaeological resources exists along segments of Skedaddle Creek and along portions of Dry Valley Rim. Moderate potential for new site location exists along the lower East Fork of Skedaddle Creek and along the escarpment of Dry Valley Rim.

Remains of the earthen fill abutments of Skedaddle Dam built and washed out in the 1890's can be seen along Skedaddle Creek in T.28N., R.18E., Section 6 NW¼SW¼.

WATER RESOURCES

Perennial flowing water is found in parts of Skedaddle Creek, South Fork of Rush Creek, East Fork of Skedaddle Creek, and Smoke Creek. A few seasonally flowing springs are scattered throughout the WSA. Seven parcels of private land within the WSA and one parcel surrounded by the WSA, but technically outside the WSA because it is on the end of a cherrystem road, contain springs. These springs constitute most of the reliable water sources within the WSA. Three springs are also located on public land. Thirty livestock reservoirs are located within the WSA.

MINERALS AND ENERGY

Leasable Minerals

The potential for oil and gas in the WSA is unknown. Twelve hundred acres had been under lease in the southwestern corner of the WSA, but have been allowed to terminate by the lessee. The WSA is not considered valuable for sodium or potassium. There are 17,400 acres on the southern 5 miles of the WSA that are considered prospectively valuable for geothermal. This area is approximately 15 miles east of the Wendel Known Geothermal Resource Area where exploration and development is occurring for low temperature geothermal resources. No exploration or development has occurred in this WSA.

Locatable Minerals

The WSA contains 5 placer claims covering 640 acres on the east escarpment of Dry Valley Rim in T.30N., R.19E., Sections 7 and 18. A lode claim has been located in T.30N., R.19E., Section 20 covering 160 acres. The claim was located in 1984. No development has occurred. Perlite is located in the WSA, but no claims have been filed.

Salable Minerals

Sand and Gravel extraction has occurred prior to WSA designation on dry lake bed terraces in the southwestern corner of the WSA. Demand for the material use is based on nearby Sierra Army Depot construction contract needs. There is one site covering 20 acres located in the southwest corner of the WSA that has a good quality gravel and is very accessible.

Energy

Covering the southern 5 miles of the WSA 17,400 acres are considered prospectively valuable for geothermal. This area is approximately 15 miles east of the Wendel Known Geothermal Resource Area where exploration and development is occurring for low temperature geothermal resources. No exploration or development has occurred in this WSA.

Three potential utility corridor routes pass through the WSA. One is located on an east-southwest axis along the northern side of the WSA; the second is located on a northwest to south axis through the western side of the WSA; and the third is located on a north-south axis through the eastern side of the WSA. Corridor development is in the preliminary planning stages and the feasibility of eventual development through the WSA is unknown at this time.

LIVESTOCK GRAZING

Grazing Use

The WSA provides livestock forage for portions of two allotments. The Twin Peaks Allotment portion comprises approximately 23% of the allotment or 3735 AUMs in the WSA. The Nev Winter Range Allotment portion comprises approximately 19% of the allotment or 286 AUMs in the WSA. The Twin Peaks Allotment

is for cattle and sheep and is in use from March through December. The Nev Winter Range Allotment is for cattle and sheep and is in use from November through March.

Range Development (existing/proposed)

Reservoirs	Springs	Wells	Fences (miles)
30/3	3/0	2/0	0/0

Most reservoir developments are located in the northern and central portion of the unit with no facilities in the southern half. Spring developments are on the north and eastern sides of the WSA. Livestock water developments and their associated vehicle access ways are the only man made intrusions evident within the WSA. Additional livestock waters are needed. See water resources above.

WILD HORSES AND BURROS

The WSA comprises approximately 20% of the Twin Peaks herd management area. Herd size recommended in the Cal Neva MFP is 600-850 horses and 75-110 burros. Management levels for the WSA portion of the herd management area have not been determined at this time. However, maintenance of herd size at management levels will require periodic gathering. BLM has gathered surplus horses and burros from this area since 1976 using helicopter gathering techniques, portable corrals and tractor trailer transport of gathered horses from the trap site. Vehicle access is required for transport of portable corral panels to the trap site and removal of trapped animals. Trap areas are selected based on a combination of herd locations and suitable terrain. Past trapping locations have been near Skedaddle Dam, T.29N., R.17E., Section 36, SE¼, ¼ mile inside the WSA boundary and near Wild Horse Reservoir, T.30N., R.17E., Section 22 S½ ½ mile outside the WSA. Horses are herded to these trap sites from within both Dry Valley Rim WSA and Skedaddle Mountain WSA.

RECREATION

Hunting is the only regular public recreational use of the WSA. Hunting use occurs each fall with chukar, quail, and dove the most popular species hunted. Popular hunting areas are along Smoke Creek and Skedaddle Creek as well as the entire steep eastern Dry Valley Rim. Limited deer, pronghorn and sagegrouse hunting also occur. Rabbit hunting occurs along the boundary roads. Total use is estimated at 3,600 visitor days/years.

Off-road vehicle use is estimated at 4,000 visitor days and occurs primarily in support of hunting and consists of 4 wheel drive use of existing ways and cross country travel particularly on the WSA's western lower slopes. The Lassen Motorcycle Club annually sponsors a 100 mile enduro ride that utilizes areas just off and parallel to the WSA's southeastern boundary road and segments of existing ways on the southwestern portion of the WSA near Skedaddle Creek as part of the route. The one day event usually draws 100 to 200 riders. Casual trail riding outings on access ways and on 30 miles of very low profile trails also occurs through parts of the WSA. Total motorcycle use is estimated at 400 visitor days annually.

LANDS AND REALTY

Private inholdings within the WSA completely surrounded by public land total 520 acres in 8 parcels owned by one landowner who is one of the primary livestock permittees in the WSA. Vehicle access to the private inholdings may be required if land owner needs cannot be satisfied by other means. Property is used primarily for livestock watering. Four of the seven parcels are accessed by existing ways that cross public land. No physical access except cross country travel exists to the other parcels. Split mineral estate exists on 200 acres of private land on the WSA's east boundary. BLM owns the subsurface minerals.

One desert land entry application is pending on 120 acres of BLM land on the eastern border of the WSA. An underground telephone cable right of way traverses along 1¼ miles of the northwestern edge of the WSA. A valid easement covers this use.

BUFFALO HILLS
WSA CA-020-619

WILDERNESS

Size and General Status

WSA CA-020-619 is located approximately 63 air miles northeast of Susanville and lies almost entirely within Washoe County, Nevada. Most of the unit lies within BLM's Cal-Neva Planning Unit of the Eagle Lake Resource Area, Susanville District. Approximately 8,320 acres are located in the Tuledad planning unit of the Surprise Resource Area.

The unit contains 47,315 acres of public land and 1,320 acres of private land located in 10 physically separate parcels varying in size from 40 to 800 acres. The unit is bordered primarily by public lands.

Boundaries consist of: on the east, the west side of Buffalo Creek Ranch private property, the North Fork of Buffalo Creek Road to approximately the center of Section 25, T.35N. R.19E., and then west and north along the prominent rim in Sections 25 and 26, then roughly north to the Buckhorn Road; on the north, the Buckhorn Road west to approximately the center of T.35N. R.19E. Section 20, then south along the prominent rim to the Cal Neva/Tuledad fence, then west and south approximately 1.5 miles around a cherrystem road, then west along the south side of this road to its intersection with the Cal Neva fence in T.35N. R.18E. Section 36, then west along the south side of the fence to its intersection with a cherrystem road, then around the cherrystem road to Sidehill Spring, then west approximately 2 miles, then southwest approximately 1 mile to the intersection with an access way, and then northwest along that way to the Pilgrim Lake to Painter Flat Road; on the west, the Pilgrim Lake to Painter Flat Road to its intersection with private land; on the south, private land and the Painter Flat to Buffalo Ranch Road.

Photo 9 - Buffalo Hills WSA

Photo 10 - Buffalo Hills WSA

Naturalness

The BLM's Intensive Inventory determined that the WSA met the minimum standards for naturalness. Naturalness for a wilderness study area means that the WSA "generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable" (Wilderness Act of 1964). In this WSA the imprint of man's work is related to facilities to support livestock grazing and access roads and ways for construction and maintenance of the livestock facilities as well as for hunting.

There are 5 miles of cherrystem roads and 26 miles of ways within the WSA. Two roads extend south from the northern boundary to access private land in Sections 5 and 8, T.34N., R.19E., and in Sections 12 and 13 T.34N. R.18E. A 2 mile road extends north to the Norton Place from the southeastern boundary. Four ways extend up to 3 miles into the WSA from the north central portion of the WSA. One way extends 2¼ miles north to Antelope Spring from the southern boundary and another way extends 1¼ miles to Painter Creek from the Western boundary. Other 1 to 2 mile ways extend into the WSA along its north, east and south boundaries.

Most of the ways within the WSA receive use only by light vehicles during hunting season and thus are two wheel tracks through the sagebrush. This makes the ways of relatively low impact on the naturalness. However, the level of use, although relatively low, has been consistent. Therefore, the ways are being maintained in their present condition and are not reverting back to a natural state. The cherrystem roads, while not technically within the WSA must be considered with respect to naturalness. Two of these roads penetrate the WSA, south from the northern boundary in relatively open country where control of ORV use would be difficult. The third cherrystem road extends north 3 miles into the WSA from the south. While limited by its confined canyon bottom route the road ends in an open area of private land surrounded by open relatively level public land easily accessed by off highway vehicle use. All cherrystem roads thus provide access deep within the WSA that afford many opportunities for unregulated cross country vehicle travel that can alter naturalness and solitude.

Range facilities impacting naturalness are: 11 reservoirs, 10 developed springs and 9 miles of fence. These facilities impact naturalness in the areas surrounding them, and because of the open terrain are more visible than in more rugged country. Total impact, however, is small.

Solitude

The WSA offers outstanding opportunities for solitude throughout the majority of the year. Livestock operator use of the WSA is the only use that occurs in the area and this use is seasonal and intermittent. Fall hunting for chukar brings an influx of hunters, primarily on weekends. In spite of the WSA's relatively flat terrain, its large size, small rims and shallow canyons provide many isolated areas that offer outstanding opportunities for solitude. Juniper scattered throughout the northern half of the WSA also adds screening to help isolate visitors.

Outside influences are limited to very intermittent vehicle use of boundary roads. Adjacent lands are mostly public with livestock grazing the primary use. Conflicts with wilderness experiences within the WSA from outside uses is not expected.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined type recreation occur throughout the WSA. Opportunities exist for hiking, wildlife observation, wild horse observation, nature study, and geologic sightseeing afforded by Hole-in-the-Ground and the south and east side canyons. Available water would require treatment for human use.

Special Features

Two distinctive features occur within the WSA. Physical relief of the Buffalo Creek Canyons is the major special feature. The canyons form steep escarpments along the WSA's east and south central segments. Average canyon depth is 500 feet. However, total relief from within the WSA to just outside the WSA in the bottom of Buffalo Creek's North Fork is over 1,000 feet in places. Hole-in-the-Ground, a shallow mile wide volcanic caldera is the other distinctive physical feature. The caldera is 200' deep and is drained by the West Fork of Buffalo Creek which in that area is a small perennial stream. Half of Hole-in-the-Ground is private. Vistas from within the WSA east to the four major canyons that disect the Poodle Mountain area afford special scenic interest. No particularly distinctive biotic or cultural features occur on public land within the WSA. The Norton Place (private) contains historic interest specific to that homestead with remains of irrigation ditches, tunnels flumes and homemade hay bailer.

TOPOGRAPHY AND VEGETATION

The WSA is on the western edge of the arid Great Basin. This unit is predominantly composed of a relatively level high upland volcanic plateau, cut on the east and south by the deep and rugged canyons of Buffalo Creek. Elevations vary from 4,340' to 6,911'. The plateau is broken by numerous small hills, ridges, and rims. The West and Middle Forks of Buffalo Creek lie completely in the unit. Only the upper reaches of the North Fork is within the unit. However, one of the WSA's most striking features is the 1,000 foot deep portion of the North Fork Canyon's western slopes that end just outside the WSA. A geologic feature of the central portion of the unit is Hole-in-the-Ground. It is a mile-wide, 200' deep circular caldera with the West Fork of Buffalo Creek bisecting it. The vegetation in the WSA is dominated by sagebrush and grass with an even scattering of juniper in the north and west. Riparian vegetation is found along the forks of Buffalo Creek and around springs. No threatened or endangered plants occur within the WSA. There are four shallow seasonal lakes in the WSA'a northern half ranging in size from 40 to 100 acres.

WILDLIFE AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

The WSA provides habitat for a typical cross section of the Great Basin wildlife. The WSA contains the following special wildlife features: sage grouse strutting grounds in the central and southern portion; deer winter range

throughout except in the WSA's northwestern 1/3 and along steep western slopes of the North Fork of Buffalo Creek; a small deer fawning area north of Painters Flat; pronghorn year long range throughout the WSA; no specific wintering concentration areas; a small pronghorn kidding area north of Painter Flat; golden eagle and prairie falcon nesting area and good chukar habitat.

No wildlife improvement facilities are located in the WSA. A minimum of three upland game guzzlers are planned for future installation when suitable sites are located.

No threatened or endangered animal species occur within the WSA.

VISUAL RESOURCES

The WSA contains B and C quality scenery on the BLM visual quality rating system. B quality scenery includes canyons of Buffalo Creek located along the WSA's eastern boundary, the Middle and West Forks of Buffalo Creek and the southeastern extension of the WSA between Buffalo and Parsnip Wash. Vistas of large canyons to the east of Buffalo Creek add scenic interest to the eastern side of the WSA. The canyons varied landforms in these areas are the primary reason for the B quality rating. The balance of the WSA is rated as C quality because of the lack of distinction in landform, vegetation or color throughout the unit.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

A seven percent random stratified sample inventory was completed for the entire Cal-Neva Planning Unit as part of the Cal-Neva EIS. In addition, clearances, especially for range seeding projects, have increased the total area surveyed to 13%. Estimates of the WSA's archeological resources are based on this information as well as limited site specific surveys conducted in response to BLM project clearances and archeological Research. Any area with natural year round water has very high potential for location of national register quality quarry sites along all rims. Areas with known high archeological potential are located along Painter Creek, in the area around Antelope Basin and in Section 22 to the north of Antelope Basin.

WATER RESOURCES

Perennial water is located on the east, middle and southern segments of the WSA in the North, Middle and South Forks of Buffalo Creek. Seven seasonally variable springs are located along the walls of Buffalo Creek's North and South Forks and three seasonal springs are located in the northern central portion of the WSA on the eastern slopes of Rowland Mountain. Seven small dam type stock reservoirs and four pit type reservoirs are located within the unit. There is a need for additional water developments and eight sites have been identified.

MINERALS AND ENERGY

Leasable Minerals

The potential for oil and gas in this area is unknown. Oil and gas leases held on the area within the WSA have been allowed to lapse by the lessees.

Leasing appears to have been speculative. The WSA is not considered valuable for geothermal or sodium.

Locatable Minerals

The WSA has no history or visible evidence of activities with respect to locatable minerals.

Appendix 3 shows the Classification and Level of Confidence Scheme that will be used to rank metallic mineral potential within the Buffalo Hills WSA. A summary value is assigned to each WSA. Significant values above average from stream sediments are indicted on Map 3-13. All rankings for mineral potential are based on the Barringer Report (1982). This report does not provide data which will allow the assignment of economic significance to the individual above background areas, nor will it indicate whether or not a mine could be developed. However, the results do provide information on where mineralization may logically be expected to occur.

The Barringer Report indicates a low favorability (2B) for accumulation of mineral resources.

The Barringer Resources Report indicates the following values significantly above average in stream sediments:

Copper-Nickel
Tungsten
Zinc
Mercury

Salable Minerals

There has been no known development of salable minerals in the WSA.

Energy

One potential utility corridor route passes along the southern edge of the WSA. A second alignment passes north of, and just outside of the WSA. The second alignment is considered higher priority of the two alignments (Sierra Pacific, May 15, 1984). Corridor development is in the preliminary stages and the feasibility of eventual development through the WSA is unknown at this time.

LIVESTOCK GRAZING

Grazing Use

The WSA provides livestock forage for approximately 13% of the Twin Peaks Allotment. This amounts to 2,111 AUMs. The Twin Peaks Allotment is for cattle and sheep and is in use from March through December.

Range Developments (existing/proposed)

Reservoirs	Springs	Wells	Fences (miles)
11/8	10/0	0/0	9/0

WILD HORSES AND BURROS

The WSA comprises approximately 10% of Twin Peaks horse use area. Herd size recommended in the Cal-Neva MFP is 600-850 horses and 75-110 burros. Management levels for the WSA portion of the horse use area has not been determined at this time but maintenance of herd size at management levels will require periodic gathering. BLM has gathered surplus horses and burros from this area since 1976 using helicopter gathering techniques, portable corrals and tractor trailer transport of gathered horses from the trap site. Vehicle access is required for transport of portable corral panels to the trap site and removal of trapped animals. Additional trap sites may be needed and may fall within the WSA.

RECREATION

Fall hunting is the only regular public use of the WSA. Popular species hunted are chukar and deer. Limited hunting of antelope and quail also occurs. Off-road vehicle use occurs primarily in support of livestock operations and hunting, and consists of 4 wheel drive use of existing ways and cross country travel. Total recreational ORV use is estimated at 3,500 visitor days/year. No rockhounding of any significance occurs within the WSA.

LANDS AND REALTY

Private inholdings totaling 1,320 acres in 10 parcels are owned by two owners. Two additional private parcels (40 acres and 800 acres) are located within the WSA. Technically, the parcels are outside the WSA because they are on the end cherrystem roads, however, physically they are surrounded by the WSA. Two inholdings are accessed by existing cherrystem roads across public land. All parcels are within ½ mile of existing ways within the WSA.

Although physical access exists to or near most of the inholdings, many of the parcel locations are deep within the WSA. One parcel located centrally within the WSA is 800 acres. Access is via a 1½ mile cherrystem road to an adjacent 40 acre parcel that makes corner point contact with the 800 acre parcel. Because of the corner point contact, the 800 acre parcel is considered an inholding rather than outside the WSA. A second 320 acre parcel located on the end of a 3 mile cherrystem road, also centrally located within the broad upland area of the WSA, is technically outside the WSA because the WSA boundary extends around the private land at the end of the cherrystem road.

If developed for agriculture or recreation, the central location of the inholdings within the WSA could contribute to adverse impacts to wilderness qualities. The largest inholdings have potential for development of irrigated meadow hay. Hunting cabin development is also feasible. Such activities could adversely impact opportunities for solitude and the experience of naturalness on adjacent relatively open public lands. Adverse impacts would be particularly noticeable to users of public lands in Hole-in-the-Ground. Other inholdings are 80 and 120 acres and are located along canyons on the eastern side of the WSA. These parcels are within 1/8 mile of the boundary road.

Of the 1,320 acres of inholdings in 10 parcels, only 1 parcel totaling 40 acres is owned by the livestock permittee who is licensed to use the area. The remaining 9 parcels totaling 1,280 acres are owned by a former permittee who's right to graze livestock on public land has been permanently revoked through court action due to repeated failure to abide by BLM grazing permits. No developed uses occur on this owner's land, however, meadow hay production on the Hole-in-the-Ground land is possible. The owner's property includes over half of the Hole-in-the-Ground caldera.

TWIN PEAKS
WSA CA-020-619A

WILDERNESS

Size and General Status

WSA 619A is located approximately 55 air miles northeast of Susanville. Two-thirds of the WSA lies within Washoe County, Nevada and 1/3 lies within Lassen County, California. The entire unit is located within BLM's Cal-Neva Planning Unit of the Eagle Lake Resource Area, Susanville, District.

The unit contains 91,405 acres of public land (1,060 acres acquired since 12/79 via State Land Exchange) and 1,260 acres of private land located in 12 parcels varying in size from 40 to 320 acres. Surface owners own all subsurface mineral rights beneath their holdings.

The boundaries of this unit are: On the west, the Smoke Creek Reservoir Road and the Smoke Creek Ranch properties; on the south, Burro Mountain Road and an underground communication cable right-of-way; on the southeast, the Sand Pass-Gerlach Road. The remaining boundaries are the Buffalo Meadow Road on the northeast, and the Parsnip Creek Road, the Mixie Flat Road and the Horne Springs-Painter Flat Road on the north. Small sections of all boundaries are composed of non-public land. One cherrystem road penetrates the WSA 2.5 miles from Mixie Flat west.

A 5 mile common boundary with Five Springs WSA (CA-020-609) occurs along Twin Peaks WSA's southwest boundary road. A 2 mile common boundary with Buffalo Hills WSA occurs along Twin Peaks WSA's north boundary road.

Naturalness

The BLM's Intensive Inventory determined that the WSA met the minimum standards for naturalness. Naturalness for a wilderness study means that the WSA "generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable." (Wilderness Act of 1964) In this WSA the imprint of man's work is related to facilities to support livestock grazing, an access road and access ways for construction and maintenance of livestock facilities as well as for hunting.

The WSA appears substantially natural throughout. The division fence in the southeast quarter of the WSA provides the most evident man-made feature in the WSA. Roads, ways and water developments are substantially unnoticeable

Photo 11 - Twin Peaks WSA

Photo 12 - Twin Peaks WSA

throughout the WSA. Heavy wild horse use has altered the vegetation in some areas. The WSA's large size and highly broken terrain reduces the effect of these features on the unit as a whole. The facilities to support livestock grazing include five small stock reservoirs, 1 windmill/well, 24 developed springs and 17 miles of fencing. All of these projects were judged to be of very low profile and hence of low impact to naturalness. The existing 10 mile north-south fence is slated for eventual removal as grazing systems have changed and its use is no longer needed.

There is one cherrystem road 2½ miles long and 38 miles of ways within the WSA. These routes, are widely spaced and extend into the WSA from all boundaries. Many ways are located in drainages and confined by the steep hillsides of the drainages. Most of the ways within the WSA receive use only by light vehicles during hunting season and thus are two wheel tracks through the sagebrush. This makes the ways of relatively low impact on the naturalness. However, the level of use, although relatively low, has been consistent. Therefore, the ways are being maintained in their present condition and are not reverting back to a natural state. The one cherrystem road, while not technically within the WSA must be considered with respect to naturalness. The road penetrates the WSA from the northern boundary and extends 2.5 miles west into the low open rolling country of the WSA's northwest quarter. The roads visibility is low. However, it provides access to open country along its route affording many opportunities for unregulated cross country vehicle travel that can alter naturalness.

Solitude

Outstanding opportunities for solitude exists throughout most of the WSA. The unit's large size and numerous canyons, rims, ridges and peaks provide excellent opportunities to experience solitude. Adjacent lands are mostly public or undeveloped private holdings and do not contain outside sights and sounds that would adversely affect wilderness experiences within the WSA.

Livestock operator use of the WSA is the only long term use that occurs and this use is seasonal and intermittent. Fall hunting for chukar brings an influx of hunters, primarily on weekends. However rugged topography limits much of the hunter associated motorized use to the outer areas of the WSA. Low open topography limits opportunities for solitude in the very northwestern and southeastern parts of the WSA.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Opportunities for primitive unconfined type recreation occur throughout the WSA. Hiking, sightseeing, wildlife observation and nature study are the major activities best suited to the area. The unit's large size and numerous canyons, rims, ridges and peaks provide excellent opportunities for hiking and exploration. Available water is limited and most water sources would require treatment for human use.

Special Features

Physical relief is the primary special feature within the WSA. The numerous mountains, canyons rims and ridges form a rugged area largely unaffected by the imprint of man. Archaeological values on the WSA's southwestern boundary

along Smoke Creek add interest to that portion of the WSA. Opportunities for viewing wildlife are also good with deer, antelope, chukar and golden eagles prevalent. Opportunities for viewing wild horses and burros are good.

TOPOGRAPHY AND VEGETATION

The WSA is on the western edge of the arid Great Basin, characterized by eroded volcanic peaks, ridges and plateaus. The topography of this unit encompasses many landform types. In the northwest are flatlands and low rolling hills with small drainages. Al Shinn Creek and Smoke Creek form canyons with perennial streams. Toward the east the landscape becomes very rugged with numerous canyons, draws, hills, and mountain peaks. The most distinctive features on the eastern side are the canyons of Willow Creek, Buffalo Creek, a perennial stream, and Chimney Rock Creek. Plant life is mostly low sage, sparsely scattered juniper and grasses. In some drainages, riparian vegetation such as willow grow in meadow areas. No threatened or endangered plants occur within the WSA. Elevations vary from 3,900' on the edge of the Smoke Creek Desert on the WSA's southeast side to 6,592' on the highest summit of Twin Peaks which dominate the central portion of the unit. Other dominant peaks in the unit are Grass Mountain, Lone Mountain, and Chimney Rock Peak.

WILDLIFE AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

The WSA provides habitat for a typical cross section of Great Basin wildlife. Special wildlife features within the WSA include sage grouse strutting grounds in the central portions of the WSA south of Mixie Flat and in the very western end of the WSA on the benches above Smoke Creek; mule deer winter range throughout the western two thirds of the WSA excluding the area south of Painter Flat; pronghorn winter range on the WSA's lower south and eastern slopes and kidding grounds in the very western end of the WSA on the benches above Smoke Creek; golden eagle and prairie falcon nesting areas; moderate trout fishery potential in Smoke Creek; good chukar habitat.

One wildlife guzzler is presently located within the WSA. Four miles of livestock exclosure fencing are planned along Smoke Creek between the WSA's western boundary and section 8, T.32N., R.17E. to improve wildlife habitat. Seven miles of riparian vegetation plantings are also planned in Smoke Creek to improve stream quality in accordance with the Smoke Creek Habitat Management Plan, September 1983. No threatened or endangered animal species occur within the WSA.

VISUAL RESOURCES

The WSA contains B & C quality scenery on the BLM visual quality rating system. B quality scenery is located throughout the majority of the WSA. Rugged canyons, rims and peaks are the primary features leading to this rating. Expansive vistas of mountain and canyon scenery outside the WSA also adds to the rating. C quality scenery is located along the lower slopes of the WSA's southeastern end, Mixie Flat area and throughout the western third of the WSA where low rolling hills and broad shallow canyons predominate. Special features of visual interest within the WSA are the 100 to 400 foot deep "U"

shaped canyons of Buffalo and Smoke Creeks and the high peaks - Twin Peaks, Lone Mountain, Grass Mountain and Chimney Rock.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

A seven percent random stratified sample was completed for the entire Cal-Neva Planning Unit as part of the Cal-Neva EIS. In addition, clearances, especially for range seeding projects, have increased the total area surveyed to 13%. Estimates of the WSA's archeological resources are based on this information as well as limited site specific surveys conducted in response to BLM project clearances and archeological research. Any area with natural year round water has very high potential for location of national register quality sites; moderate potential exists for location of national register quality quarry sites along all rims.

The Smoke Creek National Register District is located along the southwestern periphery of the WSA on both sides of Smoke Creek from ½ to 1 mile wide as well as 1 to 2 miles up major tributaries of Smoke Creek draining south and west from within the WSA. Archaeological resources in the district include high quality petroglyph panels, habitation caves and hunting blinds.

WATER RESOURCES

Perennial water is located along the southwest and northeast edges of the WSA in Smoke Creek and Buffalo Creek. Twenty-four seasonally flowing springs are scattered throughout the central and western portion of the WSA. Three small dam type stock reservoirs and two borrow pit reservoirs are also located within this area. The entire eastern third of the WSA is without developed water except for the borrow pit reservoirs and 1 well located along the periphery of the WSA within 1 mile of the eastern boundary. The need for additional livestock waters has been identified in the Cal Neva Grazing EIS, and four sites have been located.

MINERALS AND ENERGY

Leasable Minerals

The potential for oil and gas in the WSA is unknown. Past oil and gas leases held on the area within the WSA have been allowed to expire by the lessees. The WSA is not considered valuable for geothermal, sodium or potassium.

Locatable Minerals

The WSA has no history or visible evidence of activities with respect to locatable minerals.

Appendix 3 shows the Classification and Level of Confidence Scheme that will be used to rank metallic mineral potential within the Twin Peaks WSA. A summary value is assigned to each WSA. Significant values above average from stream sediments are indicated on Map 3-16. All rankings for mineral potential are based on the Barringer Report (1982). This report does not provide

data which will allow the assignment of economic significance to the individual above background areas, nor will it indicate whether or not a mine could be developed. However, the results do provide information on where mineralization may logically be expected to occur.

The Barringer Report indicates a low favorability (2B) for accumulation of mineral resources.

The Barringer Resources Report indicates the following values significantly above average in stream sediments:

Tungsten
Zinc
Copper-Nickel
Mercury
Barium

Salable Minerals

There has been no known development of saleable minerals in the WSA although potential but no demand exists for sand and gravel in the southeast corner of the WSA along pliestocene lake beds.

Energy

Two potential utility corridor routes pass through the WSA. One high priority alignment is located on an east-west axis along the southern boundary of the WSA and a second lower priority alignment is located on a northwest-southeast axis through the northeastern end of the WSA. Corridor development is in the preliminary planning stages and the feasibility of eventual development through the WSA is unknown at this time.

LIVESTOCK GRAZING

Grazing Use

The WSA provides livestock forage for approximately 25% of the Twin Peaks Allotment. This amounts to 4,060 AUMs. The Twin Peaks Allotment is for cattle and sheep and is in use from March through December.

Range Developments (existing/proposed)

Reservoirs	Springs	Fences (miles)	Wells
5/4	24/0	17/0	1/0

WILD HORSES AND BURROS

The WSA comprises approximately 20% of Twin Peaks Horse Use Area. Herd size recommended in the Cal-Neva MFP is 600-850 horses and 75-110 burros. Management levels for the WSA portion of the horse use area have not been determined at this time but maintenance of herd size at management levels will require periodic gathering. BLM has successfully gathered surplus horses and burros from this area since 1976 using helicopter gathering techniques, portable corrals and tractor trailer transport of gathered horses from the trap site. Vehicle access is required for transport of portable corral panels to the trap site and removal of trapped animals.

RECREATION

Fall hunting is the only regular public use of the WSA. Most popular species hunted are chukar, quail and rabbits. A small amount of hunting for deer and antelope also occurs. Areas of high hunter use, primarily for chukar, occur in a 3 to 4 mile wide band along the east and south sides of the WSA. In years when sage grouse hunting is open in California, a large hunter turn out occurs for the two day season. The western end of the WSA along upper Smoke Creek is the only portion of the WSA within California that is popular for sagegrouse hunting. This area receives high hunting use during this brief season. Off road vehicle use occurs primarily in support of livestock operations and hunting and consists of 4 wheel drive use of existing ways and cross country travel. A very low use and low profile motorcycle trail extends up Chimney Canyon. Total use is estimated at 7,200 visitors days/year. No rockhounding of any significance occurs in the WSA.

LANDS AND REALTY

Private inholdings within the WSA completely surrounded by public land total 1,260 acres in 12 parcels owned by 3 landowners. Private lands along the WSA's peripheral roaded boundaries total 260 acres in 5 parcels owned by 3 owners. All private parcels not adjacent to boundaries are within 2½ miles of boundaries. Six of the 12 parcels are accessed by an existing road and/or ways across public land. Three parcels located in Buffalo Creek Canyon are accessed by a jeep trail. Two of the three landowners are livestock operators, however, only one operator runs stock on public land within the WSA. The other operator has had all grazing privileges in the WSA revoked in response to a BLM Civil Suit filed for repeated trespass.

A dirt airstrip on public land is located in T.31N., R.18E., Section 5 NW¼NW¼. An underground trans continental telephone cable forms the southern boundary of the WSA. Two proposed utility corridor routes also pass through the WSA (see Section II - Minerals and Energy).

WALL CANYON
WSA CA-020-805

WILDERNESS

Size and General Status

The Wall Canyon WSA contains 45,790 acres of contiguous public lands which exceeds the minimum established in the Wilderness Act of 1964. There are 1,100 acres of private inholdings. In all cases, surface owners also have sub-surface rights.

Naturalness

The BLM Intensive Inventory determined that the WSA met the minimum standard for naturalness. In this WSA the imprint of man's work is related to facilities to support livestock grazing and access roads and ways for construction and maintenance of the facilities as well as hunting.

Photo 13 - Wall Canyon WSA

Photo 14 - Wall Canyon WSA

The facilities to support livestock grazing include 12 reservoirs, 9 developed springs, and 24 miles of fence. Twelve miles of the fence follows bladed lines. All of the projects are judged to be of low profile and hence of low impact to naturalness.

The access ways total 16 miles in length. Most of the ways within the WSA receive use only by light vehicles during hunting season an thus are little more than narrow tracks through the sagebrush. Thus, the ways are of relatively low impact on naturalness. However, with the low use levels the ways are being maintained in their present condition and are not reverting back to a natural state.

The human related impacts are fairly evenly distributed over the WSA.

Solitude

The WSA has outstanding opportunities for solitude over the entire WSA. The boundary roads receive very light use and would have virtually no influence on solitude. The rugged terrain, tall sagebrush and stands of aspen, mahogany, and junipers all provide screening to enhance visitor solitude.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

The WSA has outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation through hiking, horseback riding and wildlife observation. The WSA has two perennial streams and several live springs which would appeal to visitors.

Special Features

The WSA contains an excellent diversity of Great Basin wildlife species which is discussed under the wildlife section.

The WSA contains a good assemblage of archaeological sites which, although not individually outstanding, provide a representative sample of where and how prehistoric people lived. The details of the values are discussed under the cultural resources section.

TOPOGRAPHY AND VEGETATION

The WSA is typical of mid-elevation Great Basin mountain terrains with abundant canyons, buttes, rims, as well as upland benches and wide valley floors. Elevations within the WSA range from 5,300 to 7,340 feet.

Vegetation within the WSA is a diverse mixture reflecting the irregular topography and wide elevation range. The major vegetative community is the upland big sage/bitterbrush type on the mountain slopes. Upland benches and terraces are dominated by low sagebrush, while the aspen, mountain mahogany, meadow and riparian sites occupy very little acreage. The diversity of the sites adds significantly to the vegetative make up of the WSA.

There are no endangered, threatened or sensitive plant species known to occur within the WSA.

VISUAL RESOURCES

The diverse topography and vegetation combined with open vistas within the WSA provide good quality scenery typical of northwestern Nevada.

WILDLIFE AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

The WSA provides habitat for a typical cross-section of Great Basin wildlife. Species most likely to be observed by a wilderness visitor include pronghorn antelope, mule deer, red-tailed hawk, golden eagle, sage grouse, prairie falcon, western meadowlark, and Brewer's sparrow. The northern third and western portions have high deer, antelope and sagegrouse values.

The primary distinguishing feature of the WSA with respect to wildlife is the sage grouse. The WSA contains several large strutting grounds. The northern half of the WSA and the areas around the Nolan Ranch in the southern half provide summer/fall cover and food for sage grouse. This leads to very significant hunter use during sage grouse season. The northern half of the WSA has the third highest density of hunters in northwestern Nevada during the season.

No threatened, endangered or sensitive animal species have been identified within the WSA.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

The drainage-dissected slopes and ridges support high archaeological values due to the presence of water and topographic diversity. Several square miles of the region have been surveyed, revealing a highly complex settlement pattern: temporary camps and hunting related lithic scatters on the benches and slopes above drainages, rim-edge chipping stations, many re-occupied camps along major drainages, temporary campsites at stream confluences, canyon rockshelters, and massive obsidian sources. Several districts of potential National Register Quality have been identified.

MINERALS AND ENERGY

The BLM minerals investigations, which included consultations with industry, did not identify any significant potential for mineral development. There are no mineral leases in this WSA. Portions of four oil and gas leases were within the WSA but have been dropped. Those portions within the WSA will not be offered for lease again. The WSA is considered to have no potential for oil and gas (Sandberg, 1983). One block of approximately 5 mining claims has recently been filed on the northwestern portion of the WSA. The claims are located in the northwestern corner of Township 39N., Range 19E. M.D.M.

There are no sand and gravel use areas in this WSA.

WATER RESOURCES

There are portions of two perennial creeks within the WSA. Wall Canyon Creek rises from Big Spring in the southeastern portion of the WSA. There are valid water rights on Big Spring for irrigation purposes. Badger or Mountain View Creek rises from springs in Mountain View Canyon and is supplemented by water

from springs in Indian Valley. There are three small lakebeds and 12 small stock reservoirs. Additionally, the WSA contains 15 to 20 springs of which 9 are developed for livestock water.

LIVESTOCK GRAZING

Portions of three grazing allotments fall within the boundaries of the WSA. The Home Camp Allotment portion comprises approximately 15% of the allotment (2,175 AUMs), the Duck Lake portion comprises approximately 20% of the allotment (625 AUMs) and the Wall Canyon portion comprises approximately 30% of the allotment (1,250 AUMs). All three allotments are used spring, summer and into fall by cattle. Existing management facilities were discussed under Naturalness. Future projects are limited to two reservoirs. Existing projects are in good repair and continue to be maintained.

Motorized vehicles are used within the WSA to support livestock grazing management. Existing ways are regularly used by light trucks for salt distribution and inspection of livestock, forage and projects. Reservoirs are infrequently maintained by heavy track-mounted equipment.

RECREATION

The WSA receives an estimated 800 visitor use days per year. Approximately 700 visitor days are recreational ORV use, during the hunting seasons for deer, sage grouse, and antelope. Use levels are, in part, regulated by hunting quotas and season lengths for big game and sage grouse respectively. The northern half of the WSA receives the bulk of the use because the best wildlife habitat is there. Much of the use occurs on the private inholdings due to the presence of large springs and meadows.

In the southern portion of the WSA, the Nolan Ranch meadow attracts sage grouse hunters. A portion of the meadow is within the WSA.

LANDS AND REALTY

There are 1,100 acres of private inholdings within the WSA. These occur as 14 parcels ranging in size from 40 acres to 320 acres. All parcels except one occur in the northern half of the WSA. The private inholdings are currently managed for livestock grazing. There are no known plans to significantly alter management of the private inholdings.

LITTLE HIGH ROCK CANYON
WSA CA-020-913/NV-020-008

WILDERNESS

Size and General Status

The Little High Rock Canyon WSA contains 52,143 acres of contiguous public lands which exceeds the 5,000 acre minimum standard. There are 360 acres of private inholdings in three parcels at either end of Little High Rock Canyon. Surface owners also control mineral rights in all cases. The WSA is adjacent

Photo 15 - Little High Rock Canyon WSA

Photo 16 - Little High Rock Canyon WSA

to three other WSA's. The Docking Corral/High Rock Lake Road on the north separates the WSA from the Yellow Rock Canyon and High Rock Canyon WSA's and the High Rock Lake Road on the east separates the WSA from the High Rock Lake WSA.

Naturalness

The BLM Intensive Inventory determined that the WSA met the minimum standards for naturalness. In this WSA the imprint of man's work is related to facilities to support livestock grazing, and ways used for sheepherding activities, allotment inspection, as well as by hunters and sightseers.

The existing facilities include 20 small reservoirs, 19 miles of fence, seven developed springs and a 2,500 acre herbicide spray area. Most of the projects are of low impact to naturalness due to small size and low concentrations. The spray release area on the western boundary is highly visible for miles and does degrade naturalness in some people's eyes.

The ways total approximately 35 miles in length. The ways are used by sheepherders, hunters, trappers, cattlemen, sightseers and management personnel. The ways receive light use by light trucks on an irregular but continuing basis. The ways are of generally low impact to naturalness. The passage of vehicles maintains the ways in existing condition.

The impacts to naturalness are not evenly distributed within the WSA. Little High Rock Canyon, McConnell Canyon and the ridges between the two canyons have no project work and only short lengths of ways (1½ miles total). The area north of Little High Rock Canyon contains a number of very small reservoirs and approximately 13 miles of ways. The remainder of the projects and ways are concentrated in the western half of the WSA. This western portion of the WSA is substantially less natural in character than the remainder of the WSA.

Solitude

Most of the area would offer visitors an excellent opportunity to experience solitude. The numerous drainages, canyons, mountain peaks and rocky bluffs provide numerous obstacles that would force visitors to disperse, thus increasing the likelihood of staying removed from other visitors. The opportunities for solitude should be considered excellent in and about such topographic features. A number of flats exist between the above mentioned topographic features that allow some long range viewshed where a visitor might visually observe other visitors to the area, however, the individual would not be in view for any period of time and his presence would quickly be absorbed in the broken natural features.

The northern, eastern, and southern boundary roads receive infrequent use and therefore do not influence solitude. A portion of the western boundary is formed by Nevada Highway 34 which receives regular low frequency use by vehicles. The graveled surface creates dust trails from the passage of each vehicle, which may hang in the air for as long as 15 minutes. This reduces solitude in the vicinity of the highway.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

The WSA has outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. The types of dispersed recreation available are hiking and horseback riding for sightseeing, hunting, or rockhounding.

Special Features

The Little High Rock Canyon WSA contains significant wildlife, scenic and cultural resources which are discussed below. These values in total make the High Rock area unique in the region. The highest values are concentrated in Little High Rock Canyon and because of those values, the canyon has been designated an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC).

TOPOGRAPHY AND VEGETATION

The WSA is made up of two distinctive topographic types. The canyons and butte country consists of deep canyons and steep upland plateaus bounded almost continuously by rimrock and talus. The ridges and benches are relatively flat to gently rolling areas where rims are absent or intermittent along ridges or drainages. Elevations range from 4,900 to 6,900 feet.

The predominant vegetative type within the WSA is the low sagebrush community, with low growing shrubs, grasses and forbs.

The Mahogany Mountain area is the only portion of the WSA with significant big sage stands as well as bitterbrush and scattered mahogany thickets. The canyons have willow-riparian communities along the stream courses.

No threatened, endangered or sensitive plant species have been identified within the WSA.

WILDLIFE AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

The WSA provides habitat for a typical cross section of Great Basin wildlife. Species most likely to be observed by a wilderness visitor include pronghorn antelope, red-tailed hawk, prairie falcon, golden eagle, western meadowlark, and Brewer's sparrow. Wildlife densities are relatively low over much of the WSA due to a lack of year round water. The canyons have high densities of raptors due to the presence of good nesting sites. The northern half of the WSA supports 400 to 500 wintering antelope. The southern half is used by summering sagegrouse and antelope.

A Wildlife Habitat Management Plan (HMP) has been prepared for approximately half the WSA. The Plan proposes reintroduction of bighorn sheep into the Little High Rock area. It is expected that bighorn would thrive in the canyon. There are two proposed chukar guzzlers along the eastern boundary of the WSA.

Chukar hunters and a few fur trappers use the canyons extensively during fall and early winter. Where terrain permits vehicles are used and there is some cross country travel with ATVs (All Terrain Vehicles).

No threatened, endangered or sensitive animal species have been identified within the WSA.

VISUAL RESOURCES

The canyons have significant scenic values (Class "A" - BLM Visual Resource Inventory) based upon the topographic, vegetational, and color diversity. The remainder of the WSA does not have significant scenic values (Class "C") due to a lack of quality scenic features.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

The canyons are characterized by extremely rugged terrain, occasionally arrested by open flats and broad benches. Prehistoric occupation was most likely confined to saddles, springheads, canyon bottoms, caves and rock-shelters. Within the WSA, only Little High Rock Canyon has been subjected to intensive inventory. The Canyon is exceptionally rich in cultural resources, and a National Register District has been proposed. A historic event of great local and regional significance occurred within the WSA in 1,911. Four local stockman in search of missing livestock, were massacred in Little High Rock Canyon by a family group of Bannock Indians led by Mike Dagget. The killing and ensuing events became national news. The episode reflects on a period of cultural change, which is also documented in the archaeological record.

The remainder of the WSA is characterized by large prehistoric quarry sites and lithic scatters. Major occupation sites are found at spring sources, and several open occupation sites are known to occur in association with other water sources. Prehistorically occupied caves and rockshelters are anticipated in the steep canyon areas.

AREA OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN

Little High Rock Canyon is part of the designated High Rock ACEC (Area of Critical Environmental Concern). The High Rock ACEC is designed to protect cultural and wildlife values, while preserving the primitive character of the area. The ACEC withdraws 8,000 acres of the WSA from mineral entry.

WATER RESOURCES

The WSA contains two perennial streams in Little High Rock Canyon and McConnell Canyon. Both are spring fed and flow intermittently within the canyons. The WSA also contains several additional dependable springs and a number of wet weather springs, most of which have been excavated to form a circular pit reservoir for livestock. There is an identified need for four or five additional water sources for livestock, wildlife, and wild horses north of Little High Rock Canyon.

MINERALS AND ENERGY

The Leadville Mining District lies about four miles south of WSA 913. The District has produced lead*, silver*, copper*, gold and zinc*. Approximately 44 claims by two companies are in this WSA near the southern boundary and are

part of a much larger block of at least 780 claims in the area. Exploration drilling has been conducted within the WSA, with 34 holes drilled to date. Each hole is done with a 4 inch core drill that creates a dirt pile 2 foot high by 4 feet in diameter. These are rehabilitated by raking down and seeding to revegetate.

Appendix 3 shows the Classification and Level of Confidence Scheme that will be used to rank metallic mineral potential within the High Rock WSA's (913, 913A, 913B and 914). A summary value is assigned to each WSA. Significant values above average from stream sediments are indicated on Map 3-21. All rankings for mineral potential are based on the Barringer Report (1982). This report does not provide data which will allow the assignment of economic significance to the individual above background areas, nor will it indicate whether or not a mine could be developed. However, the results do provide information on where mineralization may logically be expected to occur.

Locatable Mineral Potential

The Barringer Report indicates a low favorability (2B) for accumulation of mineral resources.

The Barringer Resources Report indicates the following values significantly above average in stream sediments:

Tungsten*
Zinc*
Molybdenum*
Mercury*
Barium

A portion of the western edge of the WSA is considered favorable for uranium deposits in volcanic sediments.

Recent exploration activity in the southwest portion of the WSA indicates a moderate potential for precious metals.

Salable Mineral Potential

There are no sand and gravel use sites within the WSA.

Leasable Mineral Potential

About 1,640 acres of the southeastern portion of this WSA is considered prospectively valuable for geothermal.

There are no known geologic structures for competitive leasing of oil and gas in this WSA. A recent report by Sandberg (1983) concluded that this WSA is considered to have almost no petroleum potential because it contains no surviving hydrocarbons in petroleum or reservoir rocks due to the high geothermal temperatures to which they were subjected. Portions of one lease covers about 80 acres. Seven other leases have been dropped. There has been no exploratory drilling for any leasable mineral in this WSA.

* Asterisks (*) throughout the text indicate strategic and critical minerals.

Affected Environment

The Cowhead/Massacre Land Use Plan has recommended that the Little High Rock Canyon portion of the ACEC be withdrawn from mineral entry. This would affect approximately 3000 acres of the WSA. This withdrawal was directed due to the high cultural, wildlife, scenic and recreational values in the High Rock area.

LIVESTOCK GRAZING

The WSA provides livestock forage for portions of four allotments. The Bare Allotment portion comprises approximately 10% of the allotment (350 AUMs) and contains four reservoirs, two spring developments and eight miles of fencing. The Denio Allotment portion comprises approximately 25% of the allotment (400 AUMs) and contains four reservoirs, one spring development, eight miles of fence and a 5,500 acre spray area. The Leadville Allotment portion comprises approximately 20% of the allotment (500 AUMs) and contains three reservoirs, two spring developments and five miles of fence. There is a proposed 700 acre seeding within the allotment. The Massacre Mountain portion comprises approximately 15% of the allotment (500 AUMs) and contains nine reservoirs and two spring developments. There is a projected need for four to five additional reservoirs within the allotment. Seasons of use for the allotments is April through October for cattle. An important value of the WSA for livestock grazing is the spring lambing use by two bands of sheep in the Massacre Mountain Allotment. This use is accompanied by herders with temporary camps, camp tenders and trappers. The sheep use is supported by two or three vehicle trips per week. This use is made primarily during April with a limited amount of use made in the late fall as the sheep move to the winter range. Existing BLM projects are in good repair and continue to be maintained.

Motorized vehicles are used within the WSA to support livestock grazing management. Use for sheep operations were discussed above. For cattle permittees, existing ways are regularly used by light trucks for salt distribution and inspection of livestock, forage, and projects. Reservoirs are infrequently maintained by heavy track-mounted equipment.

WILD HORSES AND BURROS

There are no wild horses within the Denio portion of the WSA. The Massacre Mountain portion of the WSA is used by the Little High Rock herd. The herd uses the area north of Little High Rock Canyon year round. Current numbers are estimated to be 65 animals. The Bare Allotment portion of the WSA is used by the Hog Mountain herd primarily during the winter, when the horses drop into Little High Rock Canyon. Current herd numbers are estimated to be 40 head with a year round range which extends well beyond the WSA. The Leadville Allotment portion of the WSA is used by a portion of the Calico Mountain herd. The herd extends well beyond the WSA, with current WSA use levels unknown.

There are no wild horse management facilities within the WSA.

RECREATION

The WSA receives approximately 1,000 visitor use days annually. This use is well spread across the WSA. Much of the use, approximately 900 visitor days, is vehicular in nature primarily associated with hunting and trapping activities. Little High Rock Canyon is the exception to the general pattern. The Canyon receives approximately 100 visitor days of hiking use by hunters, trappers, and sightseers on a low frequency but regular basis.

The lack of topographical and vegetational barriers over much of the western half and in the northeast allows vehicles to travel cross country almost at will. This occurs when hunters wish to avoid walking long distances. The canyon areas cannot be traversed in a vehicle.

LANDS AND REALTY

One private parcel within the WSA (40 acres) and one parcel adjacent to the WSA (80 acres) have been identified for acquisition whenever possible under a MFP decision. An additional parcel of 320 acres lies at the west end of Little High Rock Canyon. All parcels are currently managed for grazing use by cattle.

YELLOW ROCK CANYON
WSA CA-020-913A

WILDERNESS

Size and General Status

The Yellow Rock Canyon WSA contains 13,050 acres of contiguous public lands which exceeds the 5,000 acre minimum standard. There are no private surface or sub-surface lands. The WSA is adjacent to two other WSA's. Frank's Road on the north and east separates the Yellow Rock Canyon WSA from the High Rock Canyon WSA (33,300 acres). The Docking Corral/High Rock Lake Road on the South separates the WSA from the Little High Rock Canyon WSA (52,143).

Naturalness

The BLM Intensive Inventory determined that the WSA met the minimum standards for naturalness. In this WSA the imprint of man's work is related to facilities to support livestock grazing, and ways used for sheepherding activities, allotment inspection, as well as by hunters and sightseers.

The existing facilities are limited to 11 reservoirs and 10 miles of bladed fence-line. The reservoirs are of very low impact to naturalness. The fences provide a localized impact to naturalness as the fence-lines are linear scars on the open slopes and benches.

The ways total two miles in length. The ways are primarily used by sheepherders and trappers during fall, winter and spring. The ways receive only light use by light trucks and thus are narrow tracks through the sagebrush. The ways are of low impact to the natural character of the WSA. The ways are maintained by the passage of vehicles and are not reverting back to a natural condition.

The impacts to naturalness are not evenly distributed within the WSA. Yellow Rock Canyon and the ridge south of Yellow Rock Canyon are essentially free of impacts to naturalness with one small reservoir under the Yellow Rock Canyon Rim and a fence-line cutting across the ridge. The remainder of the ways, reservoirs, and fences occur in relative close proximity of the boundaries of the WSA but are scattered around the entire perimeter.

Photo 17 - Yellow Rock Canyon WSA

Photo 18 - Yellow Rock Canyon WSA

Solitude

The numerous intermittent and irregular drainages, combined with the undulating ridges provide outstanding opportunities for isolation in the central and southern portions of the Unit. The Yellow Rock Canyon drainage and its tributaries also provide excellent opportunities for remoteness, but the landscape north of this drainage does not retain the topographic or vegetative screening that is required for outstanding solitude.

The boundary roads receive very infrequent use and therefore would not influence solitude.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

The WSA has outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. The types of dispersed recreation available are hiking and horseback riding for sightseeing, hunting, or rockhounding.

Special Features

The Yellow Rock Canyon WSA, and Yellow Rock Canyon in particular, contains a small part of the unique scenic, wildlife and cultural values found in the High Rock area. These values are detailed below.

TOPOGRAPHY AND VEGETATION

The WSA consists of three distinctive topographic types. The northern third and most of the boundary area in the southern half is open benches and slopes. The southern ridgeline is a rounded ridge cut by numerous small drainages which have intermittent small rims along the edges. The central portion of the WSA is a large deep canyon continuously bounded by tall rims.

The vegetation is dominated by low sagebrush communities. The only significant exception is in Yellow Rock Canyon where north facing slopes are dominated by big sagebrush/bunch grass sites and along the canyon bottom where dry meadow sites are found.

No threatened, endangered or sensitive plant species have been identified within the WSA.

WILDLIFE AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

The WSA provides habitat for a typical cross section of Great Basin wildlife. Species most likely to be observed by a wilderness visitor include pronghorn antelope, red-tailed hawk, prairie falcon, golden eagle, western meadowlark, and Brewer's sparrow. Wildlife densities are low due to lack of dependable water sources within the WSA. The WSA commonly supports more than 400 antelope during the winter months.

A Wildlife Habitat Management Plan (HMP) has been prepared for approximately half the WSA. The Plan proposes reintroduction of bighorn sheep into the High Rock area. It is expected that bighorn rams would occasionally use the Yellow Rock Canyon rims.

No threatened, endangered or sensitive plant or animal species have been identified within the WSA.

VISUAL RESOURCES

Yellow Rock Canyon has significant scenic values (Class "A" - BLM Visual Resource Inventory) based upon the topographic, vegetational, and color diversity within the Canyon. The remainder of the WSA does not have significant scenic values (Class "C") due to a lack of scenic features.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Yellow Rock Canyon has extensively used chert sources, caves, and rock-shelters with well-developed cultural deposits. The remainder of the WSA contains base camps at springs, and large lithic scatters on the flats and slopes of this Sub-Area. Camps are expected at the drainage confluences and caves and rock-shelters in the steep canyons should contain deposits.

Approximately half the WSA is currently being managed under a Cultural Resource Management Plan (CRMP) designed to protect and interpret cultural values of the High Rock area.

WATER RESOURCES

The WSA contains no perennial water sources. Several wet weather springs occur in and near Yellow Rock Canyon. These have been excavated to form a circular pit reservoir for livestock. Yellow Rock Canyon has intermittent flows during spring runoff. There is an identified need for two to four additional water sources for livestock, wildlife, and wild horses.

MINERALS AND ENERGY

No mining claims are located within the WSA and no exploration drilling has been conducted.

Appendix 3 shows the Classification and Level of Confidence Scheme that will be used to rank metallic mineral potential within the High Rock WSAs. A summary value is assigned to each WSA. Moderate to high above background values from stream sediments are indicated on Map 3-24. All rankings for mineral potential are based on the Barringer Report (1982) findings. This report does not provide data which will allow the assignment of economic significance to the individual above background areas, nor will it indicate whether or not a mine could be developed. However, the results do provide information on where mineralization may logically be expected to occur.

Locatable Mineral Potential

The Barringer Report indicates a low favorability (2B) for accumulation of mineral resources.

The Barringer Report indicates the following values significantly above average in stream sediments:

Zinc*
Molybdenum*

Salable Mineral Potential

There are no sand or gravel use areas in this WSA.

Leasable Mineral Potential

None of the WSA is prospectively valuable for geothermal.

There are no known geologic structures for competitive leasing of oil and gas in this WSA.

A recent report by Sandberg (1983) concluded that this WSA is considered to have almost no petroleum potential because of the high geothermal temperatures to which they were subjected. Portions of one lease was within the WSA but has been dropped. There have been no other leases in the WSA. There has been no exploratory drilling for any leasable mineral in this WSA.

LIVESTOCK GRAZING

The WSA provides livestock forage for small portions in three allotments. The Home Camp Allotment portion comprises approximately 1% of the Home Camp Allotment (50 AUMs) and contains one reservoir. The Denio Allotment portion comprises approximately 5% of the Denio Allotment (100 AUMs) and also contains one reservoir. The Massacre Mountain Allotment portion comprises approximately 4% of the Massacre Mountain Allotment (200 AUMs) and contains nine very small reservoirs. Seasons of use for the allotments is April through October for cattle. An important value of the WSA to livestock grazing is the spring lambing use by two bands of sheep in the Massacre Mountain Allotment. This use is accompanied by herders with temporary camps, camp tenders and trappers. the sheep use is supported by one or two vehicle trips per week. This use is made primarily during April with a limited amount of use made in the late fall as the sheep move to the winter range. Existing management facilities were discussed under Naturalness. Proposed water projects were discussed under Water Resources. Existing BLM projects are in good repair and continue to be maintained.

Motorized vehicles are used within the WSA to support livestock grazing management. Use for sheep operations were discussed above. For cattle permittees, existing ways are regularly used by light trucks for salt distribution and inspection of livestock, forage, and projects. Reservoirs are infrequently maintained by heavy track-mounted equipment.

WILD HORSES AND BURROS

There are no wild horses within the Denio or Home Camp Allotment portions of the WSA. The Massacre Mountain portion of the WSA is used by the western bands of the High Rock herd. The range of this herd extends well beyond the boundaries of the WSA, therefore horse numbers within the WSA may range from 0 to 50 at any given time.

* Asterisks (*) indicate strategic and critical minerals.

There are no wild horse management facilities within the WSA.

RECREATION

The WSA receives low levels of yearly visitor use (estimated less than 500 visitor use days). This use is predominantly made with motorized vehicles which account for 450 visitor days. The only place where non-vehicular use is made is in Yellow Rock Canyon where visitors must walk or ride horseback to see all of the Canyon. The ways extend short distances from the boundary. Most use is concentrated near the boundaries. The recreational use is evenly divided between hunters and sightseers.

The lack of topographical and vegetational barriers along the boundaries and north of Yellow Rock Canyon allow vehicles to travel cross country almost at will. This occurs when hunters or sheepherders wish to avoid walking long distances. The Canyon and the ridge south of the Canyon cannot be easily traversed cross country.

HIGH ROCK CANYON
WSA CA-020-913B

WILDERNESS

Size and General Status

The High Rock Canyon WSA contains 33,985 acres of contiguous public lands which exceeds the 5,000 acre minimum standard. There are no private surface inholdings. This includes 685 acres of public surface/private sub-surface scattered in small parcels along the eastern boundary.

The WSA is adjacent to four other WSA's: Yellow Rock Canyon to the west, Little High Rock Canyon and High Rock Lake to the south and East Fork High Rock Canyon to the east.

Naturalness

The BLM Intensive Inventory determined that the WSA met the minimum standards for naturalness. In this WSA the imprint of man's work is related to facilities to support livestock grazing, and ways used for sheepherding activities, allotment inspection, as well as by hunters, trappers, and sightseers.

The existing facilities include nine reservoirs, three miles of fence, one windmill and one spring development. The facilities are of low impact to naturalness due to the small acreage involved in each project.

The ways total 22 miles in length. The ways are primarily used by sheepherders and trappers during fall, winter and spring. The way receives only light use by light trucks and thus are narrow tracks through the sagebrush. The ways are of low impact to the natural character of the WSA. The ways are maintained by the passage of vehicles.

Photo 19 - High Rock Canyon WSA

Photo 20 - High Rock Canyon WSA

The impacts to naturalness are not evenly distributed within the WSA. The uplands contain all the projects and 20 miles of ways, while the canyon area has only two ways each approximately one mile long.

Solitude

The numerous intermittent and irregular drainages, combined with the undulating ridges provide outstanding occasions for isolation in the southern portion of the Unit. The High Rock Canyon drainage and its tributaries also provide excellent opportunities for remoteness, but the landscape west of this drainage does not retain the topographic or vegetative screening that is required for outstanding solitude.

The eastern boundary road in High Rock Canyon receives high levels of vehicle use (in excess of 1,000 vehicles per year). Here solitude is reduced in a narrow band adjacent to the road. The other boundary roads receive such irregular levels of use that solitude is not affected.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

The WSA has outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. The types of dispersed recreation available are hiking and horseback riding for sightseeing, hunting, or rockhounding.

Special Features

The High Rock Canyon WSA, and in particular High Rock, Mahogany, lower Yellow Rock and Grassy Canyons contain significant scenic, wildlife and cultural resource values. The combination of the values are unique in the region and in recognition the canyons have been designated as part of an ACEC.

TOPOGRAPHY AND VEGETATION

The WSA consist of two distinctive topographic types. The uplands in the north and west are open benches and slopes. The canyons are deep gorges bounded by fairly continuous rims. Elevations range from approximately 4,900 to 5,800 feet.

The predominant vegetative type within the WSA is the low sagebrush community, with low growing shrubs, grasses and forbs. The canyons contain scattered willow-riparian communities along the stream courses.

No threatened, endangered or sensitive plant species have been identified within this WSA.

WILDLIFE AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

The WSA provides habitat for a typical cross section of Great Basin wildlife. Species most likely to be observed by a wilderness visitor include pronghorn antelope, red-tailed hawk, prairie falcon, golden eagle, western meadowlark, and Brewer's sparrow. Wildlife densities are low due to lack of dependable water sources on the western half. The eastern half contains high densities of raptors due to the presence of good nesting sites.

A Wildlife Habitat Management Plan (HMP) has been prepared for approximately two-thirds of the WSA. The Plan proposes reintroduction of bighorn sheep into the High Rock area. It is expected that bighorn rams would regularly use the canyon rims and water sources.

The canyons are used extensively by a few fur trappers each winter. Trappers use existing ways as well as travel cross country extensively on "All Terrain Vehicles" (ATVs).

No threatened, endangered or sensitive plant or animal species have been identified within the WSA.

VISUAL RESOURCES

The canyons have significant scenic values (Class "A" - BLM Visual Resource Inventory) based upon the topographic, vegetational, and color diversity within the canyons. The remainder of the WSA does not have significant scenic values (Class "C") due to a lack of scenic features.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Grassy, Yellow Rock, Mahogany Canyons and portions of High Rock Canyon are known for their rich cultural values: numerous caves and rockshelters with long occupation histories, and large linear, canyon-bottom occupation sites. Some historic cabins are also documented in the area. Campsites occur at spring heads. The Lassen-Applegate Trail up High Rock Canyon is on the National Register of Historic Places and there exists an organized effort to place the entire region into National Monument status.

Intensive occupation sites are documented for the northern uplands, especially in caves and around springs. Large quarries have also been recorded. Hunting related lithic scatters are expected on the many benches and saddles, and lithic scatters on gentle slopes and knolls. Temporary camps are predicted along seasonal drainages.

AREA OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN

The canyons portion of the WSA are part of the designated High Rock ACEC (Area of Critical Environmental Concern). The High Rock ACEC is designed to protect cultural and wildlife values, while preserving the primitive character of the area.

WATER RESOURCES

The WSA contains two perennial streams in Mahogany Canyon and High Rock Canyon. Both streams are spring fed and flow intermittently within the Canyons. The WSA also contains several additional dependable springs and a number of wet weather springs, most of which have been excavated to form a circular pit reservoir for livestock. There is an identified need for five to seven additional water sources for livestock, wildlife, and wild horses.

The High Rock Canyon watershed has been identified as an erosion problem area. A watershed plan has identified a need for peak flow reduction structures

on the major drainages to reduce scouring and promote meadow rehabilitation. There are two structures proposed for the WSA.

MINERALS AND ENERGY

About 20 claims out of two blocks of 50 claims lie within this WSA near the northwestern boundary. Twelve exploration holes have been drilled in the 40 claim block. Results were not encouraging.

Locatable Mineral Potential

The Barringer Report indicates a low favorability (2B) for accumulation of mineral resources. Significant values above average from stream sediments are indicated on Map 3-27. This report does not provide data which will allow the assignment of economic significance to the individual above background areas, nor will it indicate whether or not a mine could be developed. However, the results do provide information on where mineralization may logically be expected to occur.

The Barringer Report indicates the following values significantly above average in stream sediments:

Molybdenum*
Barium

Salable Mineral Potential

There are no sand and gravel use sites within the WSA.

Leasable Mineral Potential

None of the WSA is prospectively valuable for geothermal.

There are no known geologic structures for competitive leasing of oil and gas in this WSA. A recent report by Sandberg (1983) concluded that this WSA is considered to have almost no petroleum potential because it contains no surviving hydrocarbons in petroleum or reservoir rocks due to the high geothermal temperatures to which they were subjected. There are no leases for oil and gas. No exploratory drilling has been conducted for any leasable mineral in this WSA.

Approximately 5,000 acres within the WSA including High Rock, Mahogany, and portions of Grass and Yellow Rock Canyons have been recommended for withdrawal from mineral entry as part of the High Rock Canyon ACEC.

LIVESTOCK GRAZING

The WSA provides forage in two allotments. It comprises less than 1% of the Home Camp Allotment (50 AUMs) and approximately 20% of the Massacre Mountain Allotment (1150 AUMs).

Seasons of use for the allotments is April through October for cattle. An important value of the WSA to livestock grazing is the spring lambing use by two bands of sheep in the Massacre Mountain Allotment. This use is accompanied

by herders with temporary camps, camp tenders and trappers. The sheep use is supported by four or five vehicle trips per week. This use is made primarily during April with a limited amount of use made in the late fall as the sheep move to the winter range. Existing management facilities were discussed under Naturalness. Proposed water projects were discussed under Water Resources. Existing BLM projects are in good repair and continue to be maintained. There is one proposed fence of approximately 14 miles in length. All existing and proposed projects lie within the Massacre Mountain portion.

Motorized vehicles are used within the WSA to support livestock grazing management. Use for sheep operations were discussed above. For cattle permittees, existing ways are regularly used by light trucks for salt distribution and inspection of livestock, forage, and projects. Reservoirs are infrequently maintained by heavy track-mounted equipment.

WILD HORSES AND BURROS

There are no wild horses within the Home Camp Allotment portion of the WSA. The Massacre Mountain portion of the WSA is used by the western bands of the High Rock herd. The range of this herd extends well beyond the boundaries of the WSA, therefore, horse numbers within the WSA range from 0 to 50 at any given time.

There is one horse trap site in High Rock Canyon immediately adjacent to the boundary road.

RECREATION

The WSA receives an estimated 1,500 visitor use days per year. This use is mostly confined to High Rock Canyon. Approximately 1,300 visitor days is associated with recreational ORV use, with most visitors straying less than one mile from the boundary roads. Generally, most of the use is made by sightseers to High Rock Canyon.

The lack of topographical and vegetational barriers along the western boundaries allows vehicles to travel cross country almost at will. This occurs when hunters wish to avoid walking long distances. The canyons cannot be traversed in a vehicle.

LANDS AND REALTY

There are 685 acres of public surface/private sub-surface lands. The Land Use plan mandates acquisition of the private mineral values through a mineral exchange.

EAST FORK HIGH ROCK CANYON
WSA CA-020-914/NV-020-006A

WILDERNESS

Size and General Status

The East Fork High Rock Canyon WSA contains 55,320 acres of contiguous public lands which exceeds the 5,000 acre minimum standard. There are 580 acres of

Photo 21 - East Fork High Rock Canyon WSA

Photo 22 - East Fork High Rock Canyon WSA

private lands (3 parcels) and 3,320 acres of public surface/private sub-surface lands, along the western boundary and in the bottom of East Fork Canyon.

Naturalness

The BLM Intensive Inventory determined that the WSA met the minimum standard for naturalness. In this WSA the imprint of man's work is related to facilities to support livestock grazing and ways used by hunters, livestock permittees and sightseers.

The existing facilities are limited to 17 small reservoirs, 2 windmills, and 22 miles of fence. The water projects are very low profile, mostly revegetated with little impact to naturalness. The fences are visible for miles due to open terrain and hence have a much greater impact to naturalness.

The ways total 31 miles in length. The ways are used primarily by hunters, trappers and livestock permittees. The ways receive light use by light trucks and are thus of low impact to naturalness. One exception to this general rule does occur in the northeastern corner of the WSA where large tractor-trailer rigs are used to support horse management operations. These ways show signs of heavy use.

The impacts to naturalness are not evenly distributed within the WSA. The northern third has almost all of the ways, both windmills and over half the fencing. The southern two-thirds has most of the reservoirs and the remainder of the fencing. The reservoirs are very small, often difficult to recognize as a human imprint. The fence is confined to near the eastern boundary of the WSA.

Solitude

The numerous intermittent and irregular drainages, combined with the undulating ridges provide outstanding occasions for isolation in the southern portion of the Unit. The High Rock Canyon drainages also provide excellent opportunities for remoteness.

The western boundary road in High Rock Canyon receives high levels of vehicle use (in excess of 1,000 vehicles per year). Thus solitude is reduced in a narrow band adjacent to the road. The other boundary roads receive such irregular levels of use that solitude is not affected.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

The WSA has outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. The types of dispersed recreation available are hiking and horseback riding for sightseeing, hunting, and rockhounding.

Special Features

The East Fork High Rock Canyon WSA, and particularly lower High Rock and the East Fork canyons, contain significant wildlife, scenic and cultural resource values as detailed below. The combination of the values is unique in the region and have resulted in the canyons being designated as part of the High Rock ACEC.

TOPOGRAPHY AND VEGETATION

The WSA includes three distinct topographic types. The deep canyons and buttes with continuous rims are found in the canyons and the southeastern corner. The upland benches are northerly sloping volcanic tables cut by small drainages with intermittent rims. The eastern half of the WSA is comprised of this type. The third type is the open rolling hills with few rock outcrops at the northern end of the WSA.

The predominant vegetative type within the WSA are the low sagebrush communities. They are dominated by the low growing shrubs, grasses and forbs. The northern quarter of the WSA contains large stands of sparse big sagebrush with little understory. The canyons contain willow-riparian communities along the stream courses. The east fork of High Rock Canyon also contains a remnant population of aspen trees.

No threatened, endangered or sensitive plant species have been identified within the WSA.

WILDLIFE AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

The WSA provides habitat for a typical cross section of Great Basin wildlife. Species most likely to be observed by a wilderness visitor include pronghorn antelope, red-tailed hawk, prairie falcon, golden eagle, western meadowlark, and Brewer's sparrow. Wildlife densities are low due to lack of dependable water sources on the eastern half. The western half contains high densities of raptors due to the presence of good nesting sites.

A Wildlife Habitat Management Plan (HMP) has been prepared for approximately two-thirds of the WSA. The Plan proposes reintroduction of bighorn sheep into the High Rock area. It is expected that bighorn rams would regularly use the canyon rims and water sources. There are two big game guzzlers and several reservoirs proposed on the eastern benches for wild horses and summering antelope, although exact locations have not been established.

The canyons are used extensively by a few fur trappers each winter. Trappers use existing ways as well as travel cross country extensively on "All Terrain Vehicles" (ATVs).

No threatened, endangered or sensitive plant or animal species have been identified within the WSA.

VISUAL RESOURCES

The canyons have significant scenic values (Class "A" - BLM Visual Resource Inventory) based upon the topographic, vegetational, and color diversity within the Canyons. The remainder of the WSA does not have significant scenic values (Class "C") due to a lack of extreme topography.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Exceptional prehistoric and historic values are found in the WSA. Numerous prehistoric sites have been documented in canyons, including caves and rock-shelters with ancient deposits, open occupation sites, temporary camps and

rim-edge hunting stations. The historic Lassen-Applegate Trail, currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places, passes up High Rock Canyon. Documented trail remains include wagon wheel ruts and historic graffiti. Historic structures have been documented in the canyons and additional historic resources are probable.

The remainder of the WSA has had little survey work but major prehistoric occupation sites are predicted for Wall Canyon, Hanging Rock Canyon and Cottonwood Creek. Occupation of several large caves has been documented. Small to moderate lithic scatters can be expected in drainages, at springs, and along benches and rim-edges, with sites related to prehistoric hunting activity.

AREA OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN

The canyons portion of the WSA are part of the designated High Rock ACEC (Area of Critical Environmental Concern). The High Rock ACEC is designed to protect cultural and wildlife values, while preserving the primitive character of the area.

WATER RESOURCES

The WSA contains two perennial streams in the East Fork Canyon and in High Rock Canyon. Both are spring fed and flow intermittently down the Canyons. There are few other good springs and many wet weather springs. Most of the springs have been excavated to form a circular pit reservoir for livestock. There is an identified need for additional water on the eastern half of the WSA for wild horses and wildlife. No sites have been selected, but it is expected that two new reservoirs would be needed.

The High Rock watershed has been identified as a watershed problem area. High peak flows scour existing channels causing significant erosion. A watershed plan proposes that two water control structures be constructed on major drainages to reduce peak flows and promote meadow restoration.

Other Wilderness

The WSA is adjacent to one other WSA. The High Rock Canyon Road on the west separates the WSA from the High Rock Canyon WSA.

MINERALS AND ENERGY

There are no mining claims within the boundaries of this WSA.

Locatable Mineral Potential

The Barringer Report indicates moderate favorability (3C) for accumulation of mineral resources. Significant values above average from stream sediments are indicated on Map 3-30. This report does not provide data which will allow the assignment of economic significance to the individual above background areas, nor will it indicate whether or not a mine could be developed. However, the results do provide information on where mineralization may logically be expected to occur.

The Barringer Report indicates the following values significantly above average in stream sediments:

Gold
Silver*
Tungsten*
Molybdenum*
Barium

Salable Mineral Potential

There are no sand and gravel use sites within the WSA.

Leasable Mineral Potential

None of the WSA is prospectively valuable for geothermal.

There are no known geologic structures for competitive leasing of oil and gas in this WSA. A recent report by Sandberg (1983) concluded that this WSA is considered to have almost no petroleum potential because it contains no surviving hydrocarbons in petroleum or reservoir rocks due to the high geothermal temperatures to which they were subjected. There are no leases for oil and gas. No exploratory drilling has been conducted for any leasable mineral in this WSA.

The Cowhead/Massacre Land Use Plan recommends that 7,000 acres of the WSA be withdrawn from mineral entry. This withdrawal was directed due to the high cultural, wildlife, scenic and recreational values in the High Rock ACEC area.

LIVESTOCK GRAZING

The WSA provides livestock forage in portions of four allotments. The Soldier Meadows Allotment portion of the WSA comprises less than 1% of the allotment (700 AUMs). Existing projects include ten small reservoirs and approximately ten miles of fence. The Wall Canyon Allotment portion of the WSA comprises approximately 20% of the Allotment (400 AUMs). Existing projects include eight miles of fence, two windmills and one reservoir. Proposed projects include a 2,000 acre seeding and one reservoir. The Nut Mountain Allotment portion of the WSA comprises less than 5% of the Allotment (200 AUMs). Existing projects include six miles of fence, one reservoir and one windmill. There is a proposed seeding of 1,300 acres within the WSA. The Massacre Mountain Allotment portion of the WSA comprises approximately 20% of the Allotment (no AUMs). Existing projects are limited to five small reservoirs.

The WSA actually receives less livestock use than the percentages would suggest. The Nut Mountain, Wall Canyon and Massacre Mountain portions receive very little livestock use primarily because of poor water availability. The Massacre Mountain portion will be managed as a prescription grazing unit in the future with no regular use.

Existing BLM projects are in good condition and continue to be maintained.

Motorized vehicles are used within the WSA to support livestock grazing management. Existing ways are used by light trucks for salt distribution and inspection of livestock, forage, and projects. Reservoirs are infrequently maintained by heavy track-mounted equipment.

WILD HORSES AND BURROS

The WSA contains portions of four horse herds (East High Rock, Nut Mountain, Wall Canyon and Soldier Meadows). Horse numbers within the WSA may vary through the year due to horse migrations.

There is one trap site in the northern part of the WSA which is used to gather horses from a large area (much of which is outside the WSA). Continued use of the site is dependant upon maintenance of the access ways to the site. Either of two routes can be used depending on what time of year the site is used.

RECREATION

The WSA receives approximately 1,500 visitor use days per year. This use is mostly confined to High Rock Canyon. Most of the use, 1,300 visitor days, is vehicular in nature with most visitors straying less than one mile from the boundary roads. Most of the use is made by sightseers to High Rock Canyon.

The lack of topographical and vegetational barriers along the eastern and northern boundaries allows vehicles to travel cross country almost at will. This occurs when hunters wish to avoid walking long distances. The canyons cannot be traversed cross country.

LANDS AND REALTY

There are 3,320 acres of public surface/private sub-surface lands. The Land Use Plan mandates acquisition of the private mineral values through a mineral exchange. There is one private surface parcel (160 acres) which is to be acquired when possible. This is also a Land Use Plan decision.

SHELDON CONTIGUOUS
WSA CA-020-1012

WILDERNESS

Size and General Status

The Sheldon Contiguous WSA contains 24,130 acres of contiguous public lands which exceeds the 5,000 acre minimum established in the Wilderness Act of 1964. There are 800 acres of private inholdings and 120 acres of lands administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). In all cases, surface owners also have the sub-surface rights. The Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge adjoins the WSA on the south and east. BLM lands adjoin the WSA on the north (Lakeview District) and west (Susanville District).

The WSA is contiguous to one Unit of the Administratively Endorsed Sheldon Refuge Wilderness Study Area (FWS, 26,600 acres). The entire southern boundary and a portion of the eastern boundary of WSA 1012 are contiguous to the FWS

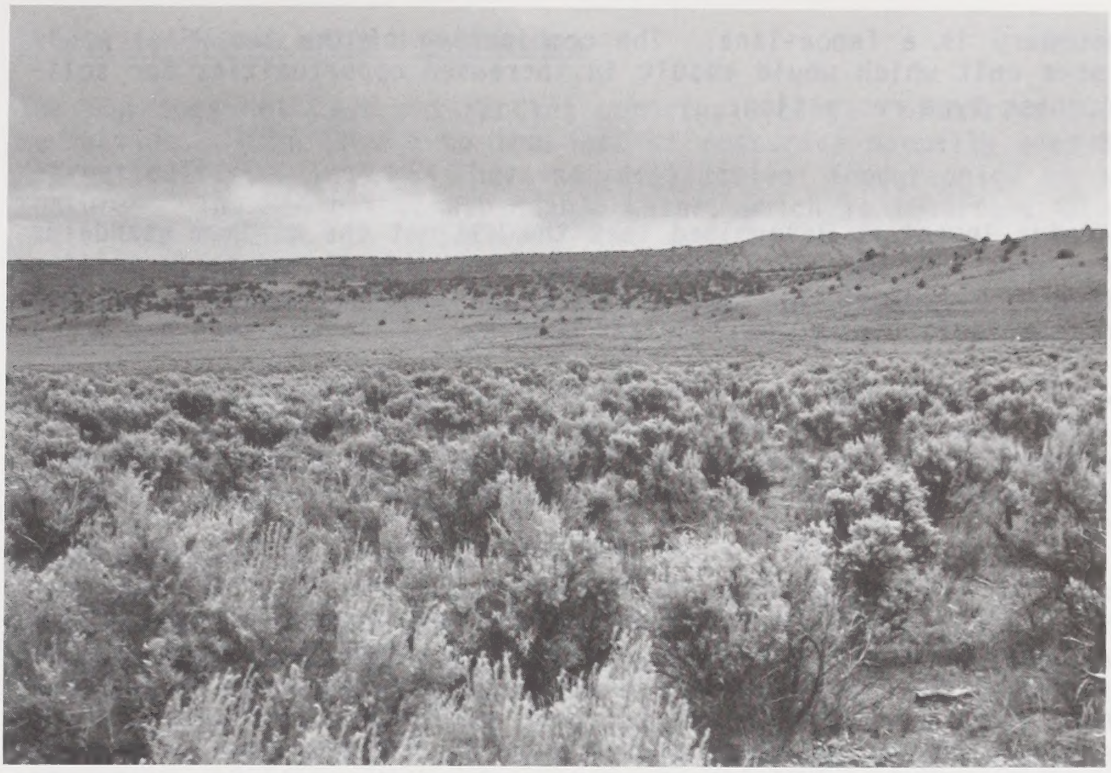


Photo 23 - Sheldon Contiguous WSA

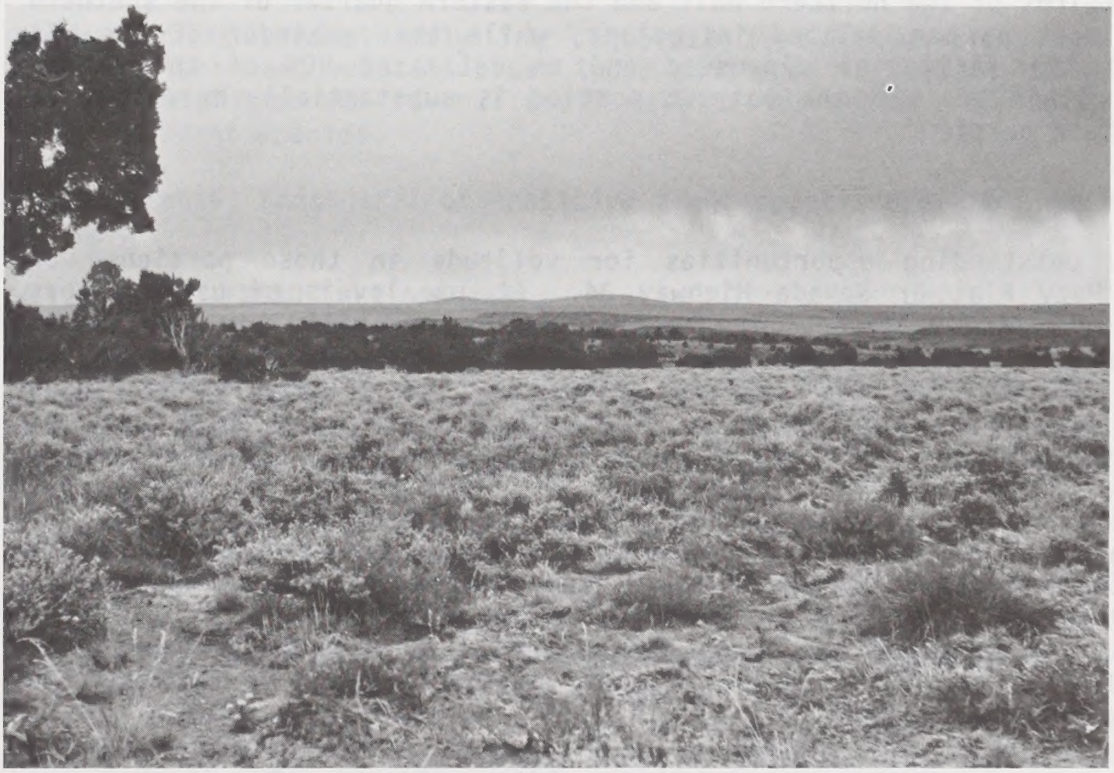


Photo 24 - Sheldon Contiguous WSA

Unit. The boundary is a fence-line. The combination of the two WSA's would be a 50,700 acre unit which would result in increased opportunities for solitude and wilderness type recreation.

Naturalness

The BLMs Intensive Inventory determined that the WSA met the minimum standards for naturalness. In this WSA the imprint of mans work is related to facilities to support livestock grazing and access roads and ways for construction and maintenance of the facilities as well as for hunting.

The facilities to support livestock grazing include seven small stock ponds, a 60 acre herbicide treatment area and several short pieces of fencing totalling approximately 2¼ miles. All of these projects, with the possible exception of the spray field, were judged to be of very low profile and hence of low impact to naturalness.

The access ways total approximately 23 miles in length. Most of the ways within the WSA receive use only by light vehicles during hunting season and thus are two wheel tracks through the sagebrush. This makes the ways of relatively low impact on the naturalness. However, the ways are being maintained in their present condition and are not reverting back to a natural state. There is one cherrystem road, which penetrates the WSA from the western boundary two-thirds of the width of the Unit and continues as a way to the eastern boundary. The road is of generally low overall impact to naturalness.

The man related imprints are not evenly distributed within the WSA. The eastern two-thirds of the northern half and the eastern quarter of the southern half have almost no man related intrusions, while the remainder of the WSA contains all the facilities discussed and an estimated 90% of the access ways. Thus within the WSA the eastern portion is substantially more natural than the western portion.

Solitude

The WSA has outstanding opportunities for solitude in those portions not adjacent to Macy Flat or Nevada Highway 34. At low levels of use visitors would be able to find solitude. The gentle terrain, generally low vegetation, scattered juniper stands and excellent visibility all combine to limit the outstanding opportunities for solitude. However, the relatively monotonous terrain and vegetation would tend to disperse visitors more than would be expected if the WSA contained features such as deep canyons or riparian areas.

The portions of the WSA adjacent to Macy Flat and Highway 34 would encounter outside sights and sounds which would preclude outstanding opportunities for solitude. In this case, the off-site sights and sounds would be due to the regular, low frequency passage of vehicles raising dust clouds visible for up to 15 miles. Ranching operations on the west side of Highway 34 would also contribute to off-site influences, through noise and dust encountered in cattle gathering and shipping.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

The WSA does not have outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. This is due to the lack of resources normally used by dispersed recreationists. The WSA has no distinctive topographic or vegetational features. The WSA has no dependable water, which is important to recreational users and results in relatively low densities and diversity of wildlife. While outstanding opportunities do not exist, the WSA does contain some opportunities for dispersed recreation for hikers and horseback riders for sightseeing and hunting.

Special Features

There are no identified unique values within the WSA which would be considered special features.

TOPOGRAPHY AND VEGETATION

The topography of the WSA is typical of the northwestern Great Basin, with open plateaus, blockfaulted rims, ephemeral lake basins, and an old volcanic cone in the southern half. Elevations within the WSA range from 5300 to 6600 feet.

All of the WSA with the exception of the strip below the rim along Highway 34, the eastern edge of Macy Flat, the large butte in the south half and the southeastern corner are open, relatively flat benches, terraces, and lake basins.

Vegetation is predominantly low sagebrush type communities with patches of dense junipers and mountain brush types scattered throughout the WSA on deeper soils. Macy Flat and several small lake basins contain stands of rushes and other emergent species.

No threatened, endangered or sensitive plant species are known to occur within the WSA.

WILDLIFE AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

The WSA provides habitat for a typical cross-section of Great Basin wildlife. Species most likely to be observed by a wilderness visitor include pronghorn antelope, mule deer, red-tailed hawk, prairie falcon, western meadowlark, and Brewer's sparrow. Wildlife densities are relatively low due to a lack of water sources within the WSA. The WSA contains 125-150 antelope on favorable years. They use Macy Flat and then move east when humans cross Macy Flat. Bighorn sheep would be expected to casually use the rims along Highway 34 if reintroductions are made either to the south or north of the WSA.

The primary distinquishing feature of the WSA with respect to wildlife is the proximity to the "Little Sheldon", a no hunting portion of the Refuge. While hunting success is no higher on the WSA than other nearby areas, the "mystique" of trophy antelope and deer coming from the Refuge draw significant numbers of hunters to the WSA. Hunting within the WSA is accomplished by use of motorized vehicle to disperse hunters within the WSA.

No threatened, endangered or sensitive animal species have been identified within the WSA.

VISUAL RESOURCES

The entire WSA has been rated as having no significant scenic values (Class "C" - BLM Visual Resource Inventory) due to lack of topographic and vegetational diversity.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

The only inventory conducted to date has been adjacent to Highway 34 on the western boundary. Six small lithic scatters were recorded. Additional sites are predicted within the WSA near empheral lakes, in areas of obsidian sources and in shallow caves in rock faces. Due to the lack of perennial water sources, the density of sites is expected to be relatively low. Site types are generally expected to be typical of the site types found throughout northwestern Nevada.

MINERALS AND ENERGY

The BLM minerals investigations, which included consultations with industry, did not identify any significant potential for mineral development, including oil and gas. There are no existing mineral rights and no mining claims are known to exist.

An analysis of the mineral resource potential and geothermal potential of the adjacent Charles Sheldon Antelope Refuge Wilderness Study Areas was conducted by the U.S. Geological Survey and U.S. Bureau of Mines (USGS-OFR 78-1002, 1978). Evaluation is based on the interpretation of analysis of rock and stream sediment samples, analyses of spring water samples, geologic mapping and geophysical surveys. Results indicate the area has low potential for the discovery of exposed mineral deposits; however, the results suggest that the area may contain concealed deposits. In the Refuge area, anomalous values of mercury, antimony, arsenic, tungsten, molybdenum, manganese, barium, the ratio of cadmium to zinc and gold form dispersion patterns that are consistent with the concealed deposit suggestion.

All springs in the Sheldon Study Area had surface temperatures below boiling. Surface data suggests the area has a low potential for geothermal resources.

Locatable Minerals

The WSA has no history or visible evidence of activities with respect to locatable minerals. The nearest activity is within the Lone Pine Mining District which is 6 miles south of the WSA. The District has produced mercury ore and is currently being explored for precious metals.

Salable Minerals

There are no sand and gravel use sites within the WSA.

Leasable Minerals

The WSA is considered to have only very low potential for oil and gas but not for geothermal or sodium or potassium. There have been no gas wells drilled within the WSA or within 50 miles of the WSA. Oil and gas leases acquired near the WSA have for the most part been dropped by the leassee.

WATER RESOURCES

There are no perennial water sources within the WSA. Emphemeral sources include five lakebeds and seven small stock ponds. Nine additional stock ponds are proposed to add additional flexibility to grazing systems.

LIVESTOCK GRAZING

Portions of the Nevada Coleman and Calcutta Allotments fall within the boundaries of the WSA. The WSA portion of the Nevada Coleman Allotment comprises approximately one-third of the Allotment (1,875 AUMs), while the WSA portion of the Calcutta Allotment portion comprises less than 5% of the Allotment (10 AUMs). Both are cattle allotments. Season of use in both runs between April 16 and October 15. The Nevada Coleman Allotment has three permittees while the Calcutta Allotment has one permittee. Existing management facilities include seven reservoirs, a 60 acre spray release area and approximately 2½ miles of fencing. Approximately 2½ miles of additional fencing are proposed. Nine additional reservoirs are proposed to add additional flexibility to the Nevada Coleman grazing system. Existing projects are in good repair and continue to be maintained.

Motorized vehicles are used within the WSA to support livestock grazing management. Existing ways are regularly used by light trucks for salt distribution and inspection of livestock, forage and projects. Reservoirs are infrequently maintained by heavy track-mounted equipment.

RECREATION

The WSA receives an estimated 400 visitor use days annually. This use is almost exclusively made with motorized vehicles with no accountable non-motorized recreation use. Most of the use is during the hunting seasons for deer and antelope. Much of the use is concentrated along the southern boundary of the WSA. Use levels are low due primarily to hunting quotas and the lack of features which would attract visitors (water sources, spectacular vistas, etc.). Although hunting use levels are low, the WSA is a highly sought out hunting area. The portion of the Refuge immediately south of the WSA is a non-hunting area. The belief among hunters that chances of finding trophies adjacent to closed areas creates a relatively elevated demand for access to the adjacent areas.

The lack of topographic and vegetational boundaries over most of the WSA allow vehicles to travel cross country almost at will. This occurs on the eastern half of the WSA when hunters wish to avoid having to carry their kills long distances to their vehicles.

LAND AND REALTY

There are 800 acres of private inholdings within the WSA. These occur in six parcels: a 480 acre parcel on Macy Flat, and five smaller parcels south of Macy Flat. The private inholdings are currently managed for livestock grazing. There are no known plans to significantly alter management of the private inholdings.

MASSACRE RIM
WSA CA-020-1013.

WILDERNESS

Size and General Status

The Massacre Rim WSA contains approximately 110,000 acres of contiguous public lands which exceeds the 5,000 acre minimum standard. There are 840 acres of private inholdings and 440 acres of lands administered by the Fish and Wildlife Service. In all cases, surface owners also have the sub-surface rights. The Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge adjoins the WSA along portions of the eastern boundary. BLM administered lands adjoin most of the remaining boundary with private lands forming a small fraction of the boundary.

Naturalness

The BLM Intensive Inventory determined that the WSA met the minimum standards for naturalness. In this WSA the imprint of mans work is related to facilities to support livestock grazing, access roads and ways for construction and maintenance of the facilities as well as for hunting and a interstate powerline.

The existing facilities to support livestock grazing includes 32 reservoirs, 5 spring developments, 54 miles of fence, 7 windmills, and 3 land treatment projects (spray release areas or seedings) totalling 4,500 acres. All of the projects with the exception of the three treatment areas were judged to be of low profile and hence of low impact to naturalness.

The access ways total approximately 39 miles in length. Most of the ways within the WSA receive use only by light vehicles during hunting season and thus are narrow tracks through the sagebrush. This makes the ways of relatively low impact on the naturalness. However, the level of use, although relatively low has been consistent. Therefore, the ways are being maintained in their present condition and are not reverting back to a natural state. One way coming from the western boundary receives heavy use by light trucks as well as large stock trucks. This way is well maintained by the passage of vehicles. There is one cherrystem road, which penetrates the WSA from the southern boundary and ends in the center of the area at a bladed fence-line.

The man related imprints are not evenly distributed within the WSA. The eastern half above the rims few man related intrusions while the western half and the boundary area on the eastern half contain almost all of the facilities and ways discussed above. Thus within the WSA, the eastern half is substantially more natural than the western portion.

Photo 25 - Massacre Rim WSA

Photo 26 - Massacre Rim WSA

Solitude

The WSA has outstanding opportunities for solitude in those portions of the WSA not near (within approximately one mile) the western, southern, or portions of the eastern boundaries. Although the terrain and vegetation within most of the WSA does not provide a significant degree of screening, the large size of the WSA would allow a moderate number of visitors to enjoy solitude.

The portions of the WSA adjacent to Highway 34 and the powerline road on the west, Highway 8A and the Massacre Seeding on the south and near Bitner Ranch on the east would encounter outside sights and some sounds which would preclude outstanding opportunities for solitude. In this case, the major off-site factor would be due to the regular, low frequency passage of vehicles raising dust clouds visible for up to 15 miles.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

The WSA has outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. The types of dispersed recreation available are hiking and horseback riding for sightseeing or hunting.

Special Features

The central portion of the WSA, encompassing the Massacre Bench, contains exceptional archaeological values as detailed below under cultural resources.

The western portion of the WSA, along the Massacre Rim scarp, contains excellent habitat for future reintroduction of bighornsheep in conjunction with the Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge.

TOPOGRAPHY AND VEGETATION

The topography of the WSA is typical of the northwestern Great Basin, with open plateaus, blockfaulted rims and ephemeral lake basins. Elevations within the WSA range from 5,520 to 6,700 feet.

The WSA is a large southerly sloping bench broken by rim bound drainages. The edges of the bench on the west and parts of the southern boundary are formed by rimrock and steep talus slopes. Portions of the southern edge are alluvial and lake terraces formed when Long Valley and Massacre Basin were lakes.

Vegetation is dominated by low sagebrush communities. These sites have scattered stands of low growing brush, grasses and forbs. The western half of the WSA has scattered dense stands of juniper trees. While the trees are short (20-30 feet tall), the older stands have individuals with diameters of 3 to 4 feet. The western and southern edges of the WSA are big sagebrush sites on deep lake basin soils. Three areas in the big sagebrush type have been treated to remove the sagebrush to increase livestock forage production.

No threatened, endangered or sensitive plant species are known to occur within the WSA.

WILDLIFE AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

The WSA provides habitat for a typical cross-section of Great Basin wildlife. Species most likely to be observed by a wilderness visitor include pronghorn antelope, red-tailed hawk, prairie falcon, western meadowlark, sage grouse, and Brewer's sparrow. Wildlife densities are moderate due to availability of water sources within the WSA. The western edge of the WSA along the large rock scarp has been proposed as a bighorn sheep reintroduction site.

The most distinctive wildlife species within the WSA is the sage grouse. The WSA supports high populations of the large game bird. They are dependent upon the spring associated wet meadows for food and cover during the dry summer months. The highest hunting levels within the WSA occur during sage grouse season.

No threatened, endangered or sensitive animal species have identified within the WSA.

VISUAL RESOURCES

The WSA has been rated as having no significant scenic values (Classes "B" and "C" - BLM Visual Resource Inventory) due to a lack of topographic and vegetational diversity. However, the expansive open vistas are thought by some to be highly scenic.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Extensive archaeological survey of this region has revealed exceptionally rich cultural values. Seven archaeological districts have already been identified for potential nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, and values are enhanced by the considerable time depth of the prehistoric occupation in this area (possibly attaining 8,000-10,000-years). There are major occupation sites at virtually all of the significant springs and along the entire length of the substantial drainages which feed Massacre Lake. The elevated slopes and rims of the Bench support specialized, short-term use hunting and temporary camps. Several caves and rock shelters in the well developed canyons north of Massacre Lake have pristine deposits which offer excellent research potential. The upland stony terraces (often juniper studded) were the scene of temporary occupation and specialized hunting activity. Longer term occupation sites are also found on moderate slopes around springs, often associated with hunting blinds and petroglyphs.

Minor, rocky drainages, of which there are many trending southeasterly, commonly yield petroglyph series. Several massive (mile long) petroglyph sites on vertical rims have been recorded in the area.

The southern portion of the WSA is part of an archaeological protection zone for which a management plan has been developed. The plan includes 2.5 miles of fence to protect a very sensitive cluster of sites within the WSA. There is current interest in large scale excavations by professional archaeologists.

Cultural resources are presently being damaged by vehicles and collectors along the southern boundary.

MINERALS AND ENERGY

The WSA contains portions of one mining district (Lone Pine) with a potential for significant mineral values. No significant values for oil and gas or any other leasable or saleable minerals have been identified.

Locatable Mineral

All or portions of 75 mining claims are located in the Lone Pine Mining District at the northern end of the WSA. Prospecting first occurred in the Long Pine Mining District in 1897. The Antelope Mine has reportedly produced a small amount of mercury. There is no present activity at the mine. No other mining claims or prospecting activities are known to occur in the WSA.

An analysis of the mineral resource potential and geothermal potential of the adjacent Charles Sheldon Antelope Refuge Wilderness Study Areas was conducted by the U.S. Geological Survey and U.S. Bureau of Mines. Evaluation is based on the interpretation of analyses or rock and stream sediment samples, analyses of spring water samples, geologic mapping and geophysical surveys.

In the east edge of the WSA, geophysical data can be interpreted as a buried caldera or pluton. Rock samples collected by the U.S.G.S. from within the boundaries of the inferred caldera contain anomalous values for mercury, gold, antimony, arsenic, tungsten, molybdenum, barium, manganese, uranium and the cadmium to zinc ratios. The distribution and association of the anomalous elements and ratios mentioned above suggest that this area has a moderate to high potential for concealed deposits (Cathrall et al, 1978). Mercury, antimony, tungsten, molybdenum, manganese and cadmium are strategic and critical minerals.

Leasable Mineral

There are no mineral leases in this WSA. Nine oil and gas leases have been dropped and those portions within the WSA will not be offered for lease again. The whole WSA is considered to have very low potential for oil and gas. About 17,280 acres of this WSA is considered prospectively valuable for geothermal. All springs in the Sheldon Report by USGS-BM had surface temperatures below boiling. Surface data suggests the Sheldon has a low potential for geothermal resources (Cathrall et al, 1978). Since the WSA is adjacent and similar, the same potential would be expected within the WSA.

The entire WSA is not considered prospectively valuable for sodium and potassium.

Salable Mineral

Washoe County Road Department has three free use permits within the border of this WSA for sand and gravel.

WATER RESOURCES

The WSA contains 10 to 20 flowing springs (depending on season and rainfall of year) with associated wet meadows. There are no perennial lakes or streams.

Emphemeral sources include 10 lakebeds and 32 reservoirs (some of the reservoirs are in lakebeds). Nineteen additional reservoirs are proposed to add additional flexibility to grazing systems. Eight springs are proposed for development.

LIVESTOCK GRAZING

All or portions of seven grazing allotments fall within the boundaries of the WSA. Existing management facilities were discussed under naturalness. Future and proposed water projects were discussed under Water Resources. There is a proposed seeding of 700 acres adjacent to an existing seeding outside the southern boundary. Four blocks totalling 1,500 acres are proposed for prescribed burning. Existing projects are in good repair and continue to be maintained.

Allotment Name	Number Permittees	Season of Use	Class of Livestock	% Within WSA	AUMs
Bitner	1	04/16 to 07/31	Cattle/sheep	100	1700
Board Corral	2	04/16 to 09/30	Cattle	90	450
Horse Lake	3	04/16 to 10/15	Cattle	10	100
Little Basin	1	04/16 to 09/15	Cattle	50	900
Massacre Lakes	2	04/16 to 08/31	Cattle	50	2650
Nut Mountain	1	04/16 to 10/15	Cattle/sheep	25	1200
Sagehen	1	05/01 to 09/30	Cattle	100	500
				Total	7500

Motorized vehicles are used within the WSA to support livestock grazing management. Existing ways are regularly used by light trucks for salt distribution and inspection of livestock, forage and projects. Reservoirs are infrequently maintained by heavy track-mounted equipment.

WOODLAND

The juniper forest in the western half of the WSA was an important cutting area for local residents. Historically, approximately half of all wood cut within the Surprise Resource Area came from this area. Due to the cutting, the area has an extensive network of ways used by woodcutters. Total year harvest was approximately 75 cords of wood. Currently, no wood cutting is being authorized within the WSA.

WILD HORSES AND BURROS

There are an estimated 30 wild horses within the WSA. Management goals call for 25 to 45 horses. Gathering of wild horses requires use of large trucks to move the traps and for transporting horses. The currently used trap site is within the WSA along the southern boundary.

RECREATION

The WSA receives approximately 800 visitor use days annually. This use is almost exclusively made with motorized vehicles resulting in 750 visitor days. Most of the use is concentrated along the southern boundary or in the western half. The southern boundary is a favorite spot for arrowhead hunters. The western half is used by hunters for sage grouse, mule deer, and antelope.

The lack of topographic and vegetational barriers along the southern boundary and the western half of the WSA allow vehicles to travel cross country almost at will. This occurs when artifact or game hunters wish to avoid walking long distances. The eastern half of the WSA on the benches contains rock fields, large brush and enough topographic relief to prevent cross country travel.

LANDS AND REALTY

The WSA contains 840 acres of private inholdings in 16 parcels. Most of the parcels do not have vehicular access. The private inholdings are currently managed for livestock grazing. There are no known plans to significantly alter management of the private inholdings.

There are two valid powerline right-of-ways (R/W) just inside the western boundary. The western R/W has a 750 KV DC powerline and an access road on it. The eastern R/W is for a proposed powerline.

Chapter 4

Environmental Consequences

CHAPTER 4

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

This chapter focuses directly on the issues identified in Chapter 1. For each WSA the environmental impacts of each alternative are described issue by issue.

There are no separate headings in this chapter for mitigating measures or cumulative impacts. All potential mitigating measures have been incorporated in the proposed actions and alternatives; no new measures were developed during the analysis. Cumulative impacts have been specifically discussed by the interdisciplinary team and, where appropriate, incorporated into the analysis below.

TUNNISON MOUNTAIN WSA
(CA-020-311)

PROPOSED ACTION (PARTIAL WILDERNESS)

7,660 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
12,990 Acres Non-wilderness.

The Proposed Action for the Tunnison Mountain WSA would designate 7,660 acres as wilderness and 12,990 acres non-wilderness.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to protection of wilderness values on the designated portion and loss of wilderness values on the non-designated portion of the WSA. Impacts on the non-wilderness area could result from potential powerline construction through the southern end of the WSA, and from impacts of construction of potential access roads to private inholdings that have recreational cabin potential.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Under this alternative 7,660 acres of the Tunnison Mountain WSA would be designated as wilderness and 12,990 acres would remain non-wilderness. The wilderness values on 7,660 acres of wilderness would receive special legislative protection provided by designation. The area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, as well as outstanding scenic, wildlife and cultural resources would be protected by wilderness management.

Wilderness values on the remaining 12,990 acres would be subjected to effects of multiple use resource management including possible powerline construction and ORV use on existing ways.

Naturalness

There would be a slight positive benefit to naturalness as a result of closure of 7,660 acres including one mile of vehicle way. Two proposed one acre reservoirs in the suitable area would locally impact the

perception of naturalness on a ten acre area each, but would enhance the overall naturalness by better distributing the livestock in the WSA. The four and one-half miles of new fence along the rim of Willow Creek Canyon in the suitable area would locally impair the perception of naturalness on approximately 200 acres along the fence lines. However, the fence would contribute to better dispersal of livestock and therefore improve the overall naturalness of the area. The approximate 476 AUMs provided for in the designated area would remain the same as currently allocated and would not impact the existing natural character. Maintenance on the eight reservoirs and approximate ten miles of fence within the suitable area would only result in very negligible impacts because of its infrequency.

On the 12,990 acres not designated wilderness, livestock use would be maintained at the existing level of 811 AUMs and would not affect the natural character in this portion of the WSA. Seven and one-half miles of fence to be constructed would locally impair the perception of naturalness on up to 350 acres. However the overall impact would be beneficial because of better livestock distribution. Maintenance on the 5 reservoirs and 18 miles of fence in the non-suitable area would have a minimal impact on naturalness because of its infrequent 5-year cycle.

The designation of 7,660 acres of the WSA would result in a complete restriction of recreational ORV use and the closure of approximately one mile of low use vehicle way. This would slightly improve naturalness in the vicinity of the way, but on the vast majority of the designated area, wilderness values would be unchanged due to a lack of existing vehicle access.

If access roads are developed for two private parcels within the designated area (40 acres each) that have potential for recreational hunting and fishing cabin development, naturalness would be disturbed along the access roads. Each parcel would require approximately one mile of access road. Approximately 4 acres (2 acres/mile) would be disturbed by road construction. These parcels are located on lower slopes south of Tunnison Mountain. Road development would be visible from elevated positions on Tunnison Mountain resulting in a loss of the perception of naturalness on approximately 500 acres.

No development is currently planned for the 5 ten acre parcels along Willow Creek or the 4 additional parcels (40, 40, 120 and 160 acres) located on the east slope of South Horse Lake Mountain in the nondesignated portion of the WSA. Since the private inholdings are not related to livestock use and the owners have expressed recreational interests, development of private recreational cabins for hunting and fishing is likely to occur. Current, county zoning regulations would limit development to one cabin per parcel. Development of the Willow Creek parcels would require ¼ mile of new access road construction within the WSA which would locally impair the perception of naturalness on approximately 20 acres as a result of the removal of vegetation and surface disturbance. Development of the other 4 parcels on the eastern slope would require up to 4 miles of access road construction. The perception of naturalness would be reduced on up to 2,000 acres due to the openness of the vegetation.

Consequences

On the 7,660 acres of the WSA designated as wilderness, there would be no impacts from the development of mineral resources, since no mineral development could occur. On the non-wilderness portion, 12,990 acres, wilderness values are also not expected to be adversely impacted by mineral development activities. No exploration and development of mineral resources are projected due to the low mineral values within the WSA.

If a utility corridor is developed through the southern end of the WSA, a portion of the non-designated area, wilderness values in that area would be adversely affected. The area affected is approximately 3 miles long. Approximately 4 miles of service road is also anticipated. Both the utility corridor (overhead powerline) and service road would adversely impact naturalness over an area covering approximately 3,000 acres. Physical ground disturbance would be slight to moderate. Visual contrasts would be high.

Solitude

Opportunities for solitude would improve on 7,660 acres of the Tunnison Mountain WSA by eliminating 150 visitor days of ORV use in the designated portion of the WSA. Livestock improvement maintenance operations would be slightly disruptive to solitude by periodic trips into the WSA, but contacts between maintenance activities would be rare. There would be 4 to 6 annual maintenance trips in each of the designated wilderness and non-wilderness segments. In the wilderness portion, there would be an additional 5 trips every 5 years for major maintenance of reservoirs. In the nonwilderness portion, there would be an additional 2 trips every 5 years for major maintenance of reservoirs. The 2 new reservoirs would mean an additional maintenance trip every 5 years.

Construction activities of fences and reservoirs will disrupt solitude for 4 or 5 days in the designated wilderness area and 3 or 4 days in the non-wilderness area. The projects will have no long-term adverse impact to solitude.

Solitude on the non-designated portion would be slightly reduced over time as hunter associated recreational vehicle use would be expected to increase by 150 visitor days to a total of 600 visitor days resulting from closure of the wilderness portion of the WSA.

Access to the private parcels described under naturalness would slightly disturb solitude during construction of access roads. Solitude would be intermittently disturbed when roads and recreational cabins were in use.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would be retained and slightly enhanced in the designated wilderness portion due to the elimination of 150 visitor days of ORV use. In the non-designated portion, the quality of the opportunities would be diminished in the southern part of the WSA where 3 miles of high voltage powerline would be developed. Development of the private land parcels with associated access would also lower the quality of hiking, horseback riding or nature study in the surrounding area. Increased ORV use from the current 450 visitor days to a total of 600 visitor days would reduce opportunities in the vicinity of the 3½ miles of ways and 7 miles of cherrystemmed roads.

Special Features

Willow Creek Canyon with its scenic values, cultural resources, trout fishery and riparian habitat would be just inside the southern border of the designated portion of the WSA and would, therefore, receive some protection from ORVs by closure of this portion of the WSA through wilderness designation. Construction of 4¼ miles of livestock fence along the rim of Willow Creek Canyon would slightly reduce scenic quality within the canyon.

Conclusion:

The 7,660 acres of the Tunnison Mountain WSA designated wilderness would receive long-term statutory protection and would slightly improve due to the elimination of 150 visitor days of recreational ORV use. Potential development of access to private inholdings would result in localized impacts on wilderness values and impair the perception of naturalness on 500 acres. Construction of livestock reservoirs and fence would reduce the perception of naturalness on an additional 220 acres.

On the 12,990 acres not designated as wilderness, naturalness and solitude will be slightly reduced resulting from development of livestock improvements, and a increase of 150 visitor days of recreational ORV use. Construction of a livestock fence would impair the perception of naturalness on approximately 350 acres. Potential development of access for private inholdings would result in localized impacts on the perception of naturalness on 2,020 acres. Potential development of the proposed Trans Sierra Utility Corridor would diminish wilderness values and the perception of naturalness on up to 3,000 acres within a 3 miles corridor.

Impacts on the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor

Wilderness designation of 7,660 acres as proposed in this alternative would not affect construction of a Trans Sierra utility corridor alignment through approximately three miles on the southern end of the WSA. This area is in the non-designated portion of the WSA and would remain open for the utility corridor.

Conclusion:

Wilderness designation of 7,660 acres in this alternative would not affect the Trans Sierra utility corridor.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Wilderness designation would close 7,660 acres to ORV use displacing 150 visitor days of ORV use from the designated portion of the WSA to the non-designated portion. One mile of vehicle way would be closed to ORV use off of Long Valley Canyon in the center of the WSA. Other than the short one mile way that heads up a short side drainage south of Long Canyon, no other ORV trails or use areas would be affected by wilderness designation under the Proposed Action. Steep slopes and/or heavy brush limit vehicle use in this area. Therefore, there would be negligible impact to recreational ORV use from designating 7,660 acres wilderness since use would be accommodated in the remaining non-wilderness portion of the WSA.

Consequences

Conclusion:

Closure of one mile of way and 7,660 acres to recreational ORV use would displace 150 visitor days of recreational ORV use. Recreational ORV use would increase from 450 to approximately 600 visitor days/year in the non-wilderness portion of the WSA.

Adverse Impacts Which Cannot be Avoided

Wilderness values on 12,990 acres of the WSA will not be protected by designation. Naturalness would be unavoidably lost on the area that the powerline and the two livestock reservoirs would be constructed due to surface disturbance.

Relationship Between Local Short-Term Uses of Man's Environment and the Maintenance and Enhancement of Long-Term Productivity

Short-term uses of recreational ORVs and utility corridor development would adversely impact the long-term natural quality of the 12,990 acres of the WSA not designated. Future short term development options will remain open in the non-designated portion of the WSA and long term productivity is not likely to be impacted.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources

The construction of a powerline and service road would result in an irreversible commitment of the wilderness resource in the 3 mile long utility corridor. Throughout the remainder of the WSA there are no activities anticipated in the foreseeable future that would result in more than a slight impact on wilderness values.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

20,650 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
0 Acres Non-wilderness

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the entire 20,650 acres of public land in the Tunnison Mountain WSA would be designated as wilderness.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to the protection of wilderness values, the elimination of recreational ORV use for hunting and fishing access, potential impacts of access road construction to private inholdings and elimination of a 3 mile segment of a potential Trans Sierra utility corridor alignment through the southern end of the WSA.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, a total of 20,650 acres would be protected by statute. Wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be protected. Additionally, the supplemental values of topography, vegetation diversity, scenic quality, wildlife and cultural resources would be protected by wilderness management.

Naturalness

There would be a slight positive benefit to naturalness as a result of closure of 20,650 acres to ORV associated recreational use including 7 miles of cherrystemmed roads and 4½ miles of ways.

Construction of two small reservoirs would reduce naturalness on less than one acre. Topographic screening will reduce visual impacts of the disturbances and natural revegetation will gradually further reduce contrasts to naturalness. The perception of naturalness will be diminished on 20 acres from construction of these reservoirs.

Construction of 7½ miles of allotment division fence through the middle of the WSA and 4½ miles of livestock exclosure fence along Willow Creek will locally impair the perception of naturalness on up to 550 acres. The fences will be located to avoid high visual contrasts and reduce impacts to naturalness. Overall naturalness should benefit with riparian regrowth resulting from exclosure of livestock from Willow Creek. An improved trout fishery in Willow Creek is expected to result from lowered water temperatures afforded by increased riparian shading of pools. This should also increase wilderness value within the WSA.

If private inholdings are developed for recreational hunting and fishing uses and access roads are required, up to 6 miles of access roads could be built disturbing up to 15 acres. Impacts to the wilderness qualities of naturalness would be the same as described for the Proposed Action with the perception of naturalness reduced on up to 2,520 acres.

Wilderness qualities of naturalness would be preserved on 3,000 acres in the southern end of the WSA where a potential 3 mile utility corridor would not be built because of wilderness designation.

Solitude

Solitude would be slightly reduced during maintenance of springs, fences and reservoirs, but contacts between activities would be rare. Impacts are the same as discussed in the Proposed Action.

Construction activities for 2 new reservoir and up to 7½ miles of allotment division fence through the middle of the WSA and 4½ miles of livestock exclosure fence along Willow Creek will disturb solitude for 7-9 days in the short-term, but will have no long-term impact on solitude.

Elimination of 600 visitor days of recreational ORV use would improve solitude within the WSA. However, ORV use on the open eastern edge of the WSA's lower slopes and south of Willow Creek Canyon would be difficult to control due to the lack of physical constraints. Unauthorized vehicle use of this area for hunting, fishing and wood cutting access would cause intermittent adverse impacts to solitude.

If private inholdings are developed for recreational hunting and fishing uses and access roads are required, impacts to solitude would be disturbed intermittently when roads are in use.

Consequences

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would be enhanced slightly in the vicinity of the existing 11¼ miles of ways and cherry-stemmed roads with the elimination of 600 visitor days of ORV use. By precluding the development of the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor through the WSA, existing opportunities, particularly hiking, horseback riding, and nature study would be retained. Development of private inholdings would diminish primitive and unconfined recreation opportunities in the surrounding area.

Special Features

Willow Creek Canyon would be just inside the southern border of the WSA and would, therefore, receive some protection from ORVs by designation. Construction of the 4¼ miles of livestock fence along the rim of Canyon would slightly reduce scenic quality along Willow Creek.

Conclusion:

All wilderness values would receive long-term Congressional protection. Wilderness values would only be slightly enhanced over present levels due to unauthorized ORV use and the impacts associated with development of private inholdings. Overall the perception of naturalness would be impaired on up to 3,090 acres from the development of livestock reservoirs, fences, and access to private inholdings.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Wilderness designation would close the entire 20,650 acres including 4¼ miles of ways and 7 miles of cherrystemmed roads in the center and southern half to all forms of recreational ORV use. The elimination of 600 visitor days of ORV use would have a slight to moderate adverse impact on hunters who rely on four wheel drive vehicles for access to popular hunting areas in Long Canyon, along The Crossing road and on lower, open slopes of Tunnison and South Horse Lake Mountains. Overall, however, hunting throughout the WSA would continue as much of the WSA presently hunted is only accessible on foot or horseback.

Conclusion:

Wilderness designation of the entire 20,650 acre WSA would result in an estimated loss of 600 visitor days of recreational ORV use.

Impacts on the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor

Designation of the entire WSA as wilderness will constrain use of approximately 3 miles of the southern portion of the WSA from Willow Creek south for a utility corridor by narrowing the corridor available for building to about 2 miles in width outside the WSA. Adverse impacts to the utility industry are considered to be moderate since an alternate alignment further south appears difficult since acquisition of or easements across private land would be required.

Conclusion:

The WSA would not be available for a potential route of the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor. Impacts are considered moderate because additional alignment space is available on private and public lands south of the WSA.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

15,090 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
5,560 Acres Non-wilderness

This alternative is similar to the All Wilderness Alternative with the following exceptions: 5,560 acres would not be designated wilderness. Impacts on the non-wilderness areas would result from periodic ORV activity during the fall hunting season. Development of a 3 mile segment of the Trans Sierra utility corridor through the southern end of the WSA would be possible. Impacts resulting from wilderness designation of 15,090 acres would relate to protection of wilderness values on the designated portion of the WSA.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Under the Partial Wilderness Alternative, a total of 15,090 acres would be protected by statute. Wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be protected. Additionally vegetative diversity, scenic quality, wildlife and cultural resources would be protected by wilderness management.

Naturalness

There would be a slight positive impact to naturalness as a result of closure of 15,090, acres to recreational ORV use, including one mile of vehicle way.

Construction of two small reservoirs would reduce the perception of naturalness on less than ten acres each. Topographic screening will reduce visual impacts of the disturbances and natural revegetation will gradually further reduce contrasts to naturalness.

Construction of 7 miles of allotment division fence through the designated area in the middle of the WSA and 4½ miles of livestock exclosure fence along Willow Creek will locally reduce the perception of naturalness on up to 550 acres. Overall naturalness should benefit with riparian regrowth resulting from exclosure of livestock from Willow Creek. An improved trout fishery in Willow Creek is expected to result from lowered water temperatures afforded by increased riparian shading of pools.

The approximate 940 AUMs provided for in the designated area would remain the same as currently allocated and would not impact the existing natural character.

Consequences

On the 5,560 acres of the WSA, not designated wilderness, 450 visitor days ORV activity primarily related to hunting will continue. Affected areas are lower, open slopes on the eastern edge of the WSA and rolling terrain south of Willow Creek Canyon. Vehicle use of this area for hunting, fishing and wood cutting access during the wet fall use period would cause rutting, adversely impacting naturalness.

If 5 private inholdings are developed for recreational hunting and fishing uses and access roads are required, up to 4 miles of access roads could be built in the designated area disturbing up to 12 acres. The perception of naturalness would be impaired on up to 2,020 acres.

If three miles of potential utility corridor are developed through the non-designated portion of the WSA south of Willow Creek Canyon, the perception of naturalness would be adversely impacted on approximately 3,000 acres. Impacts would be moderate surface disturbance and high visual contrasts.

Solitude

There would be a slight positive impact to solitude due to the elimination of 150 visitor days of recreational ORV use as a result of closure of 15,090 acres, including one mile of vehicle way.

Solitude would be slightly reduced during maintenance of springs, fences and reservoirs, but contacts between activities would be rare. There would be 6 to 8 annual maintenance trips in the designated area and 2 to 4 annual maintenance trips in the non-wilderness portion. There would be an additional 7 trips every 5 years to do major maintenance of reservoirs with the 2 new proposed reservoirs adding 1 trip every 5 years for major maintenance in the suitable portion.

Construction activities of 7 miles of allotment division fence through the designated area in the middle of the WSA and 4½ miles of livestock exclosure fence along Willow Creek will disturb solitude for 6 to 8 days, but will have no long-term impact on solitude.

The approximate 940 AUMs provided for in the designated area would remain the same as currently allocated and would not impact the existing solitude.

If 5 of the private inholdings are developed for recreational hunting and fishing uses and access roads are required, up to 4 miles of access roads could be built in the designated area. Impacts to the wilderness quality of solitude would be disturbed intermittently when roads are in use.

If private inholdings are developed for recreational hunting and fishing uses and access roads are required, up to 2 miles of road in the nondesignated area could occur. Impacts to solitude would occur intermittently when roads are in use.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would not change significantly on the 15,090 acres recommended as wilderness. Development

of the private land parcels would potentially reduce the quality of hiking, horseback riding and nature study in the surrounding area due to the increased activity in the vicinity of the private inholdings.

In the non-designated portion the quality of the opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would be diminished in the area of the southern part of the WSA where the 3 miles of high voltage powerline was developed.

Special Features

Willow Creek Canyon would be just inside the southern border of the WSA and would, therefore, receive some protection for its special features as a result of the elimination of 150 visitor days of ORV use. Construction of the 4¼ miles of livestock fence along the rim of Willow Creek Canyon would slightly reduce scenic quality.

Conclusion:

On 15,090 acres, wilderness qualities of naturalness, solitude and primitive recreation would benefit from all wilderness designation. Potential adverse impacts to naturalness could occur if private inholding owners require access. Livestock fencing would locally impact naturalness, but overall would improve naturalness through achieving better livestock distribution and by eliminating livestock from riparian areas along Willow Creek.

In the non-designated area, wilderness qualities would also benefit from livestock exclosure fencing along Willow Creek. Utility corridor development would reduce the perception of naturalness on 3,000 acres in the southern end of the non-designated area.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Impacts on Recreational ORV use with designation of 15,090 acres wilderness are similar to those under the Proposed Action/Partial Wilderness which designates 7,660 acres wilderness. The additional acres closed to ORV use in the north end under this alternative is not accessible to ORV's due to steep rocky terrain or brush covered slopes. All major vehicle accessible ways and lower elevation slopes remain available for ORV use. Wilderness designation of 7,660 acres would eliminate 150 visitor days of recreational ORV use.

Conclusion:

Closure of one mile of way and 15,090 acres to recreational ORV use would eliminate 150 visitor days resulting in negligible impacts to recreational ORV users.

Impacts on the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor

Lands identified for wilderness designation in this alternative do not include the potential alignment of the Trans Sierra utility corridor through the southern end of the WSA.

Consequences

Conclusion:

There would be no impact on the Trans Sierra utility corridor.

NO WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

0 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
20,650 Acres Non-wilderness

Under this alternative, none of the 20,650 acre WSA would be designated wilderness.

The primary impacts of this alternative relate to how development of range and wildlife facilities, ORV use and utility corridor development affect wilderness values.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

None of the 20,650 acre WSA would be designated as wilderness, therefore, none of the wilderness values would receive special statutory protection provided by designation. The short-term impact of this would not be significant since little development activity is anticipated whether or not the WSA is designated wilderness. Planned livestock and wildlife management actions are the same under non-wilderness as planned under wilderness. Continued ORV use and the potential development of the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor would result in the primary impacts on wilderness values.

Naturalness

Construction of 7 miles of allotment division fence through the middle of the WSA and 4½ miles of livestock exclosure fence along the rim of Willow Creek Canyon will locally reduce naturalness on up to 200 acres. Location of the fences to avoid high visual contrasts will reduce impacts to naturalness. Overall naturalness would benefit with riparian regrowth resulting from exclosure of livestock from Willow Creek. An improved trout fishery in Willow Creek is expected to result from lowered water temperatures afforded by increased riparian shading of pools.

Construction of 2 small reservoirs would reduce the perception of naturalness on less than ten acres per reservoir in small drainages located in the central portion of the WSA. Topographic screening will reduce visual impacts of the disturbances and natural revegetation will gradually further reduce contrasts to naturalness.

Off-road vehicle use on 4½ miles of trails and 7 miles of cherrystemmed roads as well as the WSA's lower slopes and open terrain south of Willow Creek Canyon would continue. Most of the 600 visitor days occur in association with four-wheel drives for hunting, fishing and firewood cutting access. Vehicle use of these areas during the wet fall use period would cause rutting, adversely impacting naturalness. Overall impact to naturalness would be slight to moderate.

If private inholdings are developed for recreational hunting and fishing uses and access roads are required, up to 6 miles of access roads could be built disturbing up to 15 acres. The perception of naturalness would be impaired on up to 2,020 acres.

If three miles of potential utility corridor are developed through the non-designated portion of the WSA south of Willow Creek Canyon, naturalness would be adversely impacted on approximately 3,000 acres. Impacts would be due to surface disturbance and high visual contrasts of the powerline tower sites and access roads.

Solitude

Construction activities of 7 miles of allotment division fence through the middle of the WSA and 4¼ miles of livestock exclosure fence along the rim of Willow Creek Canyon will disturb solitude for 6 to 8 days, but will have no long-term impact on solitude.

Solitude would be slightly reduced during maintenance of springs, reservoirs and fences, but contacts between visitors and ongoing maintenance activities would be rare. There would be 8 to 12 annual maintenance trips. There would be an additional 7 trips every 5 years for major maintenance of reservoirs. The two proposed reservoirs would add an additional major maintenance trip every 5 years.

Solitude will continue to be impacted from the existing 600 visitor days of off-road vehicle use of the WSA's lower slopes and open terrain south of Willow Creek Canyon. Most use occurs in association with four-wheel drives for hunting, fishing and firewood cutting access. Vehicle use of these areas would cause intermittent adverse impacts to solitude. Overall impact would be slight to moderate.

If private inholdings are developed for recreational hunting and fishing uses and access roads are required, up to 5 miles of access roads could be built. Impacts to solitude would be disturbed intermittently when roads are in use.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would continue to be diminished in the vicinity of 4¼ miles of existing ways and 7 miles of cherrystemmed roads due to ORV use. Potential development of 3 miles of the high voltage powerline would diminish primitive and unconfined recreation in the southern portion of the WSA. Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would also be diminished in the vicinity of private inholdings should they be develop.

Special Features

Willow Creek Canyon would be outside any designated wilderness area and, therefore, would not receive any protection under wilderness designation. Designation of the canyon as a special management area would preclude ORV use. Construction of 4¼ miles of livestock fence along the rim of the canyon would slightly reduce scenic quality.

Consequences

Conclusion:

Wilderness qualities of naturalness, solitude and primitive recreation would be reduced on up to 20,650 acres. Development of the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor and continued ORV use would result in moderate local impacts. Potential adverse impacts could occur if private inholdings require access and are developed.

Impact on Recreational ORV Use

Non-wilderness designation of the entire WSA will have no adverse impact on recreational ORV use. Areas used by ORVs for hunting, fishing and wood cutting access would remain available. Willow Creek Canyon will be closed to ORV use as provided for in the Willow Creek MFP. Closure will not change the present situation since the canyon is not vehicle accessible. The current 600 visitor days of recreational ORV use is not anticipated to increase.

Conclusion:

There would be no impacts on recreation ORV use.

Impacts on the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor

Non-wilderness designation would not affect construction of a Trans Sierra utility corridor alignment through approximately three miles of the WSA's southern end. This area has been identified by the utility industry as part of a possible Trans Sierra utility corridor and would remain open for use if the alignment is selected for development.

Conclusion:

No impact on potential Trans Sierra utility corridor development through the WSA.

FIVE SPRINGS
(CA-020-609)

PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS)

0 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
48,460 Acres Non-wilderness

Under the Proposed Action, none of the 48,460 acre Five Springs WSA would be designated as wilderness.

The primary impacts of the Proposed Action relate to impacts to wilderness values.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The entire 48,460 acre WSA would not be designated as wilderness and none of the wilderness values would be protected by legislative action. The short-term impact of this action would be negligible since little development activity is anticipated in the short-term.

Naturalness

The continued use of the WSA by 5,600 visitor days of recreational ORV use would maintain the present condition of the 15 miles of ways within the WSA. As described in the affected environment (Chapter 3), the ways are two wheel tracks that have a relatively low impact on naturalness. The continued presence of 15 miles of ways would maintain approximately 18 acres in an unnatural condition. The perception of naturalness would be localized to the immediate vicinity of the ways as they do not have cuts, fills or graded roadways.

Livestock grazing and range management actions would not significantly change from the existing situation. One additional livestock reservoir is planned that would require approximately 2/3 acre of surface disturbance. It is located in a draw near the western boundary and the perception of naturalness would only be affected on an area of approximately 15 acres. Seven miles of fence are planned in the northwest portion of the WSA. Surface disturbance will almost be nonexistent as no clearing of the fenceline is required and the metal posts are driven into the ground. The perception of naturalness will be impaired only when a visitor is in close proximity (200 ft.) to the fenceline. This would amount to an area of approximately 400 acres.

A change in naturalness would occur along the southeast side of the WSA should the proposed corridor of the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor be used and a high voltage powerline and service road be constructed. Nine miles of powerline and 12 miles of service road would sever up to a maximum of 8000 acres off the southeast side of the WSA. The actual surface disturbance of the service road and tower pads would be less than 100 acres. The perception of naturalness would be affected within an area approximately a mile wide on either side of the powerline totalling 8,000 acres.

Solitude

Opportunities for solitude would be constrained by the continued 5,600 visitor days of vehicular use on 15 miles of ways in the WSA as shown of the Motorized Use Map in Chapter 3. During much of the spring and summer a visitor would not be disturbed by more than a single vehicle and on many days would not even see one. During the fall hunting season and particularly on weekends there would be several vehicles per day on each of the ways.

Solitude would be affected very slightly by Range and Wild Horse Management activities. Wild horse roundup with the use of a low flying helicopter would be done for a couple of days every 3 to 4 years. During every spring and fall visitors might encounter vehicles moving or supplying sheepherder camps or aerial flights for predator control. The trips to supply the camps amount to approximately 1 trip per week and the predator control flights are only for 2 to 3 days in spring and fall. Livestock facility maintenance activities would continue with approximately 6 to 8 vehicle trips annually plus an additional 10 trips at 5 year intervals for spring and reservoir maintenance. The addition of 7 miles of fence and 1 reservoir would not significantly change the existing maintenance schedule or affect solitude.

Consequences

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would continue throughout the majority of the WSA as presently exists. The activities of hiking, horseback riding and nature study would not be impacted over most of the WSA by the minor development activities proposed. However, potential construction of a high voltage power line and service road would diminish the opportunities for these activities within the 8,000 acres affected by the powerline.

Special Features

The national register archaeology sites in the southwestern part of the WSA would not be impacted by any of the planned developments. No surface disturbing activities are proposed in the area of the archaeology sites. No development or excavations of the sites themselves are proposed.

Conclusion:

The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be reduced in the long-term on up to 8,000 acres should a high voltage powerline be built in the proposed utility corridor along the southeast boundary of the unit. Additionally the perception of naturalness would be impaired within 400 acres as a result of construction of a livestock fence in the northwest portion of the WSA.

The wilderness values of naturalness and opportunities for solitude would be slightly reduced on 40,460 acres through continued recreational ORV use of 5,600 visitor days annually.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

The entire WSA would be open to recreational ORV use. Over the long-term, use is not projected to significantly change from the current estimated 5,600 annual use days.

Conclusion:

Recreational ORV use would be expected to remain near current use levels of 5,600 visitor days. There would be no impact on recreational ORV use.

Impacts on the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor

The proposed utility corridor totalling 9 miles would be available for future construction of a high voltage powerline.

Conclusion:

There would be no impacts on the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor.

Impacts on Endangered Species

Bureau policy requires that before a surface disturbing activity can take place in areas near populations of plants on the California Native Plant

Society list, a clearance survey take place. If the plants are found in the location to be disturbed, mitigation to avoid or lessen the impact would take place. The proposed surface disturbing activities involve small areas and could be moved if a population of Scutellaria holmgreniorum was found. The one livestock reservoir and the potential transmission towers would disturb less than an acre at each location for a total of less than 50 acres. The powerline and service road are not near the western area that has the known growth of plants, scutellaria holmgreniorum. Therefore, the impact on scutellaria holmgreniorum of this area not being wilderness would not be significant.

Conclusion:

The potential for impacts on endangered species would not be significant due to the small number of possible surface disturbing activities, the mitigating measures available at each location, and no surface disturbing activities planned in the area that plants are found.

Adverse Impacts Which Cannot be Avoided

The wilderness values of naturalness would be unavoidably lost on the area that the powerline would be constructed and the one stock reservoir. Solitude would be temporarily disturbed by the use of vehicles for recreation, grazing maintenance and airplanes for wild horse gathering and predator control.

Relationship Between Local Short-Term Uses of Man's Environment and the Maintenance and Enhancement of Long-Term Productivity

If the WSA is not designated wilderness, all present, short-term uses would continue, under the Proposed Action. Future short-term development options will remain open and long-term productivity is not likely to be impacted. However, without wilderness designation, the possibility of activities such as mineral development that could reduce long-term productivity is greater.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

The construction of a powerline and service road would create an irreversible commitment of the wilderness resource in the 9 mile long powerline corridor and the 8,000 acre area cut off the WSA by the service road. In the remaining area there are no activities anticipated in he foreseeable future that would have more than a slight impact on wilderness values.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

48,460 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
0 Acres Non-wilderness

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the entire 48,460 acres of public land in the Five Springs WSA would be designated as wilderness.

The primary impacts under this alternative are related to vehicle closure, Trans Sierra Utility Corridor and impacts on wilderness values.

Consequences

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The All Wilderness Alternative would result in all 48,460 acres of the WSA being protected by legislative mandate. Wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, as well as scenic quality, wildlife and cultural resources would also be protected by wilderness management.

Wilderness values would be enhanced by designation of the adjacent Dry Valley Rim WSA which shares a 5 mile common boundary along the Smoke Creek Road on the southeast side of Five Springs WSA. Wilderness values would also be enhanced by designation of the adjacent Twin Peaks WSA that shares a 5 mile common boundary road along the northeast side of Five Springs WSA. In these areas, in effect, a larger wilderness would be created separated only by 10 miles of boundary roads.

Naturalness

Wilderness designation would close the entire 48,460 acres to all forms of recreational ORV use which should have a slight improvement in naturalness over a long time as the 15 miles of ways become less noticeable. Some of the ways would continue to be used several times a year for operation and maintenance of the grazing activity.

Construction of a one acre stock pond and seven miles of fence a planned would have the same impacts as discussed in the Proposed Action.

Solitude

Solitude would be improved by the removal of 5,600 visitor days of recreational vehicular use. The boundaries of the All Wilderness Alternative include areas on the periphery where the topography and vegetation make enforcement of ORV closures very difficult. Any barriers on existing ways or off of boundary roads could easily be bypassed. During hunting season several vehicles a day could penetrate the boundary. This illegal activity would slightly degrade solitude over about half the WSA, all around the perimeter of the area.

The impacts on solitude from grazing operation and maintenance, wild horse and burro gathering, and predator control are the same as discussed in the Proposed Action.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

The opportunity for primitive and unconfined recreation would essentially remain the same as presently exists. The activities that are mainly available are hiking, horseback riding and nature study. They would be slightly improved by the removal of 5,600 visitor days of motorized recreation.

Special Features

There would be no impacts on the nation register archaeology sites as described under the Proposed Action.

Conclusion:

Wilderness values would only be slightly enhanced over present levels due to continued vehicle travel for range management activities and illegal ORV use.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Wilderness designation would close the entire 48,460 acres of the WSA to recreational ORV use. All 15 miles of vehicle way would be closed. Recreational ORV use of approximately 5,600 visitor days would be eliminated annually from the WSA. Public land that offers similar opportunities for recreational ORV use is located throughout the region. Therefore, recreational ORV use foregone in the WSA would be absorbed on the surrounding public lands.

Conclusion:

Recreational ORV use of 5,600 visitor days would be foregone annually. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

Impacts on the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor

Wilderness designation of the entire WSA would mean that there would be no utility corridor through the WSA. The future construction of high voltage powerlines within the 7 mile corridor would have to occur outside the WSA. As the utility companies have indicated that this is a preferred potential location, it follows that another location would increase costs in construction of a future powerline. The future line would either be longer to reach its destination or over more rugged terrain. As the alternate routes have not been identified, we cannot quantify exactly what the increases would be.

Conclusion:

There would be no utility corridor in the WSA. Any future powerlines would have to use an alternate route outside the WSA.

Impacts on Endangered Species

Under this alternative, the only proposed surface disturbing activity that could take place is the one small livestock reservoir. It is not located near the known population of Scutellaria holmgreniorum, which is on list No. 2 of the California Native Plant Society. Bureau policy requires that a clearance be done prior to any surface disturbance. If the plants are found in the location to be disturbed, mitigation to avoid or lessen the impact would take place.

Conclusion:

There would be no impact on endangered species as the one proposed small livestock reservoir that would be allowed is located away from the known population of Scutellaria holmgreniorum.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

25,174 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
23,286 Acres Non-wilderness

The Partial Wilderness Alternative would designate 25,174 acres as wilderness and 23,286 acres as non-wilderness.

The primary impacts of this alternative relate to the protection of wilderness values.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

In this alternative 25,174 acres of the Five Springs WSA would be designated as wilderness and 23,286 acres would not be designated. The wilderness values on 25,174 acres would be protected by legislative mandate and by special wilderness management.

Naturalness

The impacts of recreational ORV use on naturalness would remain at it presently exists in the existing situation. The 15 miles of ways are in the nonwilderness portion of the WSA. They would continue to be used at the present levels of 5,600 visitor days per year for the foreseeable future. At these levels they would remain in essentially their present condition. On the 25,174 acres designated as wilderness, recreational vehicular traffic would not be allowed but as there are no ways in the designated portion there would be no impact on naturalness.

The impacts from livestock grazing and range management actions would be approximately the same as stated in the Proposed Action. This is because the one livestock reservoir and six of the seven miles of fence are in the designated wilderness portion. The only difference would be the area affected by the perception of naturalness near the planned fenceline. As six of the seven miles of fence are in the designated wilderness section then 343 acres would be where visitor perception of naturalness would be affected by the fenceline in the designated area. Five to seven miles would be in the non-wilderness portion.

In the nonwilderness part of the WSA, a significant chang in naturalness would occur along the southeast side of the WSA should the proposed corridor of the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor be used and a high voltage powerline and service road be constructed. Nine miles of powerline and 12 miles of service road would sever up to a maximum of 8,000 acres off the southeast side of the WSA. The actual surface disturbance of the service road and tower pads would be less than 100 acres. The perception of naturalness would be affected in a strip a mile wide on either side of the powerline.

Solitude

The impacts on solitude in the nonwilderness portion as a result of recreational vehicular use would be the same as stated in the Proposed Action as all 15 miles of ways are in the nonwilderness portion of the WSA

and would remain open. In the designated wilderness 25,174 acres there are no vehicle ways and due to the ruggedness of the terrain little or no recreational vehicle use has occurred or would occur after designation.

The effects on solitude from Range and Wild Horse Management activities would be almost the same as those stated in the Proposed Action. Although the levels of activity are quite low to begin with they would be the least in the designated portion as it contains 3 existing reservoirs, 3 existing spring developments and 5 miles of existing fence plus 1 planned reservoir and 6 planned miles of fence. The non-wilderness portion contains 11 existing reservoirs, 6 existing spring developments, 2¼ miles of existing fence and one mile of planned fence. The wild horse gathering occurs over the entire WSA with no difference occurring between wilderness and nonwilderness portions. Predator control flights also cover the whole area also.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would remain as they presently exist in the wilderness designated portion of the WSA. On the nonwilderness portion they would remain the same on all but the maximum of 8,000 acres affected when a high voltage powerline and service road is built. There the attractiveness of activities such as hiking, horseback riding and nature study would be diminished by the presence of the powerline and road.

Special Features

There would be no impacts on the national register archaeology sites as described for the Proposed Action.

Conclusion:

Wilderness values on 25,174 acres would be protected by wilderness designation, but would negligibly be enhanced by designation. On 23,286 acres of non-wilderness, wilderness values of naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be negligibly reduced through continued recreational ORV use. Wilderness values on 8,000 acres would be lost due to the future construction of a high voltage powerline in the utility corridor.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Those portions around the perimeter of the WSA and the 15 miles of ways would be accessible to recreational ORV use. They are located in the nonwilderness part of this alternative. The long-term levels of recreational ORV use is expected to remain at approximately 5,600 visitor days annually.

Conclusion:

There would be no significant impact on recreational ORV use. Recreational ORV use is expected to remain near current use levels of 5,600 visitor days.

Impacts on the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor

The proposed utility corridor would be in the non-wilderness area and the future construction of 9 miles of a high voltage powerline could take place.

Conclusion:

There would be no impacts on the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor.

Impacts on Endangered Species

The known population of Scutellaria holmgreniorum would be outside the area recommended as wilderness. There would be no significant impact on this plant which is on list No. 2 of the California Native Plant Society. Bureau policy requires that before a surface disturbing activity such as construction of a small stock reservoir or powerline tower can take place, a clearance survey will be done. If the plants are found in the area to be disturbed, mitigation to avoid or lessen the impact would take place.

Conclusion:

The impact on endangered species would not be significant due to the small number of possible surface disturbing activities and the mitigating measures available at each location.

SKEDADDLE MOUNTAIN
(CA-020-612)

PROPOSED ACTION (PARTIAL WILDERNESS)

37,240 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
26,550 Acres Non-wilderness

The Proposed Action for the Skedaddle Mountain WSA would designate 37,240 acres as wilderness and 26,550 acres non-wilderness.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to the protection of wilderness values and the loss of wilderness values on portions of the WSA impacted by ORV use and utility corridor development.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Under this alternative 37,240 acres of the Skedaddle Mountain WSA would be designated as wilderness and 26,550 acres would not be designated. The wilderness values on the 37,240 acres of wilderness would receive special legislative protection provided by designation. The area's naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, as well as outstanding scenic, wildlife and cultural resources would be protected by wilderness management.

The east side of the Skedaddle designated area forms a 4.75 mile common boundary with the area recommended for designation under the Proposed Action in Dry Valley Rim WSA (CA-020-615). This, in effect, would create a larger wilderness separated only by the space along the boundary road. In this area wilderness values would be protected by Congressional designation on two acres adjacent for 4.75 miles.

Naturalness

On the 37,240 acres designated wilderness, no mineral, oil and gas or geothermal development would occur minimizing the potential for impacts to naturalness.

Off-road vehicle use would be prohibited on 37,240 acres designated wilderness. Eight miles of ways within the designated area would be closed to ORV access. This would slightly improve naturalness in the vicinity of the ways, but on the vast majority of the designated area, wilderness values would be unchanged due to lack of existing vehicle access.

Construction of one stock pond reservoir in the designated area would locally impact naturalness. The reservoir would be located in a small drainage visually screened from adjacent areas. Natural re-vegetation would gradually reduce the unnatural appearance of the earthen dam. Overall adverse impact on naturalness would be slight, with 2/3 acre disturbed and perception of naturalness affected on 10 acres.

On the 26,550 acres not designated wilderness, the following actions would affect naturalness:

Development of one well/windmill would locally impact naturalness, therefore, the primary adverse impact on wilderness qualities would be the 30' windmill used to pump the water. This would be visible for approximately a one mile radius around the well on th alluvial slope where the well is located. Overall adverse impact on naturalness would be slight.

Construction of 6 wildlife guzzlers in the non-designated area would locally disturb naturalness on a 30' X 30' area. The low profile and camouflaged coloration of guzzlers reduces overall visual contrasts so that the structures are not readily noticeable unless the viewer is close by or overlooking the structure.

Off-road vehicle use would continue in the non-designated area. ORV users continuing to travel existing access ways and roads and drive cross country to hunting areas would cause slight to moderate adverse impacts to naturalness during the fall. Overall impacts on naturalness would be slight, but would increase gradually as roads and ways are lengthened over time through repeated use.

Mineral development is not anticipated in the non-wilderness portion of the WSA due to very low mineral potential. Therefore, no adverse impacts to wilderness values would occur resulting from mineral development. In the unlikely event that the 2 claims near the northern boundary of the WSA were to be developed naturalness would be altered within 200 acres of the WSA.

Consequences

Geothermal exploration on 500 acres of the Wendel Amedee KGRA in the southwest portion of the WSA would result in 10 acres of surface disturbance and 2 miles of access road construction which would have a small but noticeable adverse impact on the perception of naturalness within a 300 acre area at the base of Wendel Cliffs. This area is not visible from the majority of the WSA.

In the event that geothermal resource production would be realized, development facilities would occur outside the WSA to allow utilization of a potentially larger steamfield outside the WSA. Terrain becomes very gentle west of the WSA.

If a utility corridor is developed along the high priority potential alignment through the non-suitable area on the northern end of the WSA, naturalness would be impacted by approximately 7 miles of overhead high voltage powerline and 7 miles of associated service road. The perception of naturalness on approximately 7,000 acres would be diminished as a result of surface disturbance for the towers and roads as well as the presence of the powerline.

The following activities would impact naturalness in both the designated and non-designated areas:

Gathering of wild horses would have an indirect slight benefit on naturalness by reducing the potential for over grazing. Location of one trap site within the non-designated portion of the WSA ½ mile from the boundary road would locally alter naturalness during the few days necessary for gathering.

Naturalness would be adversely impacted by activities of the Sierra Army Depot demolition facility located on the lower southern slopes of the Amedee Mountains adjacent to the WSA. Detonations of ammunition at the Depot facility cause noise, dust and smoke cloud drifts that have adverse affects on naturalness within the WSA. The extent of impacts depend upon wind direction, type of material detonated or burned and frequency of detonation or burning. Single to multiple detonations usually occur within a one-hour period in mid-afternoon.

Adverse impacts to naturalness result from smoke and dust cloud drift across portions of the WSA. Prevailing westerly winds usually send the dissipating cloud eastward or northeastward impacting approximately 10% of the WSA. On it Southeast side. Impacts of detonation blasts are loud explosive sounds similar to sonic booms. Greatest sound impacts from detonations occur on south facing slopes of the Amedee Mountains.

Solitude

On the 37,240 acres designated wilderness, the following actions would affect solitude:

No mineral development, oil and gas or geothermal leasing would occur in the designated area. There are no claims within the designated area and none are anticipated based on a projected low potential for the area. Therefore, no impacts on solitude would result from mineral development.

Off-road vehicle use would be prohibited on 37,240 acres designated wilderness. Eight miles of ways within the designated area would be closed to ORV access. This would slightly improve solitude in the vicinity of the ways, but on the vast majority of the designated area, wilderness values would be unchanged due to lack of existing vehicle access. In the Skedaddle Creek drainage that surrounds access roads and ways located in the non-designated area, solitude would be disturbed intermittently during the fall hunting season.

Livestock grazing and range management actions would not significantly affect solitude as the use levels and maintenance activities are not expected to change. Maintenance of 7 springs, 17 reservoirs and 1½ miles of fence could cause slight impacts on solitude. However, contacts between visitors and on-going maintenance activities would be rare because major maintenance would generally occur on a five to fifteen year interval for springs and reservoirs. Annual checks and light maintenance would occur on fences and springs. Annual maintenance trips would average 4 to 6 trips with an additional 16 trips on 5 year cyclic intervals for spring and reservoir maintenance.

Sheep herding activities involving vehicle transport and re-supply of herder camps average 1 to 2 trips per week in the spring and fall. Trappers and low level aerial flights for predator control would disturb solitude irregularly through portions of the designated area during early spring and late fall.

Construction of one stock pond reservoir would locally disturb solitude for two to three days during construction. The reservoir would be located in a small drainage visually screened from adjacent areas.

In 26,550 acres not designated wilderness, the following management activities would occur having various impacts on solitude:

Maintenance of 8 springs, 14 reservoirs and 4½ miles of fence would cause slight adverse impacts on solitude. Contacts between visitors and ongoing maintenance activities would be rare because major maintenance would generally occur on a five to fifteen year interval for springs and reservoirs. Annual checks and light maintenance would occur on fences and springs. Annual maintenance would average 4 to 6 trips with an additional 16 trips at 5 year cyclic intervals for spring and reservoir maintenance.

Development of one well/windmill would locally disturb solitude for a two to three day period during construction. Well construction would disturb a 50' X 50' area during the two to three day period of drilling. Therefore, the primary adverse impact on wilderness qualities would be the 30' windmill used to pump the water. This would be visible for approximately a one mile radius around the well on the alluvial slope where the well is located. Overall adverse impact on solitude would be slight.

Consequences

Construction of 6 wildlife guzzlers in the non-designated area would locally disturb solitude for a one or two day period per guzzler during construction. Increased populations of upland game birds served by the guzzlers would enhance supplemental wilderness values of wildlife.

Off-road vehicle use would continue in the non-designated area. ORV users continuing to travel existing access ways and roads and drive cross country to hunting areas would cause slight to moderate adverse impacts to solitude. ORV impacts on solitude will be influenced primarily by hunting season regulations (season of use, number of permits issued) rather than by the wilderness designation under this alternative. Boundaries of the designated area provide for off-road vehicle access in the non-designated area to most existing access routes within the WSA. The annual influx of hunters who make up 4,200 of the estimated 4,500 recreational visitor days per year in the WSA will seasonally reduce solitude as they have in the past during the fall hunting season.

Mineral development is not anticipated in the non-wilderness portion of the WSA due to very low mineral potential. Therefore, no adverse impacts to solitude would occur resulting from mineral development. In the unlikely event that the 2 claims near the northern boundary of the WSA were to be developed, solitude would be altered within 200 acres of the WSA.

Geothermal exploration on 500 acres of the Wendel Amedee KGRA in the southwest portion of the WSA would result in 10 acres of surface disturbance and 2 miles of access road construction. The exploration would occur from ½ to 1 mile from the designated wilderness and would have only a slight impact on solitude over an area of approximately 300 acres along the base of Wendel Cliffs. This area is isolated from the great majority of the WSA.

The following activities would impact solitude in both the designated and non-designated areas:

Gathering of wild horses would have an indirect slight benefit on naturalness by reducing the potential for over grazing. The actual gathering with helicopters herding the horses to trap sites would negligibly reduce solitude for visitors when the helicopter was actually nearby. This would only occur on a three to four year interval for a few days at a time.

Sheep herding activities involving vehicle transport and re-supply of herder camps would involve 1 or 2 trips per week in the spring and fall. Trappers and low level aerial flights for predator control would disturb solitude irregularly through portions of the area during early spring and late fall.

Predator control activities in the designated and non-designated areas would reduce solitude during the period that control activities are being carried out. This is not anticipated to be a significant impact because there has been no history of visitor use on the portions of the WSA receiving predator control when the control occurs.

Solitude would be adversely impacted by activities of the Sierra Army Depot demolition facility located on the lower southern slopes of the Amedee Mountains adjacent to the WSA. Detonations of ammunition at the Depot facility cause noise, dust and smoke cloud drifts that have adverse affects on solitude within the WSA. The extent of impacts depend upon wind direction, type of material detonated or burned and frequency of detonation or burning. Single to multiple detonations usually occur within a one-hour period in mid-afternoon.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

In the area designated as wilderness, the opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would remain as they presently exist. Activities most likely to occur would be hiking, horseback riding, rockclimbing and nature study. In the non-wilderness portion of the WSA, there would be very little change in the availability of these activities. The development of 500 acres of the Wendel KGRA and 7 miles of high voltage powerline along the northern boundary of the WSA would reduce the opportunity for primitive and unconfined recreation on approximately 7,300 acres. Those areas are not part of the steeper slopes of the Skedaddle Mountains and are not the most attractive locations in the WSA for hiking, horseback riding, rockclimbing or nature study.

Special Features

The special features of cliffs, scenic quality, and raptor nests would be within the designated area. As these features are currently not threatened by any activities, protection afforded by wilderness would be minimal with no projected impacts from management actions under the Proposed Action.

Conclusion:

The 37,240 acres of the Skedaddle Mountain WSA designated as wilderness would receive long-term Congressional protection. Slight adverse impacts to solitude and naturalness would occur on an infrequent basis resulting from livestock operations and during livestock facility inspections and maintenance. Gathering of wild horses would also disrupt solitude, but would occur so infrequently as to have negligible impact on solitude. Periodic impacts on solitude and naturalness caused by activities at the Sierra Army Depot would continue.

Non-designation of 26,550 acres would result in an overall minor reduction of wilderness values as a result of livestock operations, ORV use and geothermal exploration. The proposed Trans Sierra Utility Corridor development would adversely impact the perception of naturalness on up to 7,000 acres.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Designation of 37,240 acres of wilderness will have minimal adverse impact on recreational ORV use. All major access roads, ways and open terrain remain available. Areas designated wilderness are those portions of the WSA generally inaccessible to vehicles. Cherrystemmed access roads within the designated area are included as part of the boundary to allow for ORV access to popular areas.

Consequences

Non-designation of 26,550 acres leaves the heaviest hunting areas to the north open to ORV access.

Conclusion:

Wilderness designation of 37,240 acres will have a negligible adverse impact on recreational ORV use.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

On the 37,240 acres designated wilderness, mineral resources could not be developed. No claims presently occur within this area. There is no past history of mineral development of any significance within the entire WSA and none is expected in the future. Seven claims in the North Fork of Wendel Canyon, T.29N., R.16E., Sections 10 and 15, were in effect at the time of passage of FLPMA, October 21, 1976. Assessment affidavits for these claims, however, have not been filed since 1983. The claims are, therefore, no longer on the records.

The 26,550 acres of non-designated area remain available for mineral development. Two placer claims filed in 1985 in T.30N., R.16E., Sections 10 and 11, near the northern boundary of the WSA within the non-designated area have not been developed. Saleable minerals (ancient lake bed sand and gravel deposits) located around the west and south sides of the non-designated area have not been utilized. Other higher quality and/or more accessible deposits outside the WSA indicate a low likelihood of development for these deposits.

Conclusion:

Mineral Development would be foregone on 37,240 acres designated wilderness. Low mineral potential indicates negligible impact on future mineral resource development. The remaining 26,550 nonwilderness area would be available for mineral development, however, likelihood of development appears low.

Impacts on Geothermal Resource Development

Geothermal resource development could not occur on 37,240 acres designated wilderness. This includes approximately 16,940 acres of the 21,540 acres within the WSA considered prospectively valuable for geothermal resources. Additionally, approximately 1,040 acres within the designated area are part of the Wendel-Amedee Known Geothermal Resource Area (KGRA). However, the potential for future development of geothermal resources within the area designated wilderness appears to be low due to the relatively low temperature resource known to occur within the KGRA, and the rugged topography that will make future development difficult and costly.

In the 26,550 acre non-designated portion of the WSA, exploration and development could occur. More gradual slopes on 500 acres of the Wendel KGRA in the non-designated area make this area more feasible for development, however, no leases have been issued for this area.

Conclusion:

Wilderness designation would eliminate future exploration and development on 37,240 acres designated wilderness. Geothermal exploration and development could occur in the remaining portion of the WSA. Impacts on geothermal resource development is considered minimal.

Impacts on the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor

If selected for development, approximately 7 miles of overhead high voltage powerline and 7 miles of associated service road could be constructed through the high priority alignment identified by the utility industry for a Trans Sierra utility corridor. Approximately 7,000 acres would be impacted. Ten miles of an alternate alignment with lower priority through the east of the WSA could not be built as proposed, because 4 miles passes through the eastern side of the WSA designated as wilderness.

Conclusion:

Wilderness designation on 37,240 acres would not prevent construction of a high priority utility corridor alignment through the northern end of the WSA. A lower priority alignment on the east side of the WSA would not be available for development because of wilderness designation in this area.

Impacts on Private Waters

Public recreational use of 9 parcels of private land within or adjacent to the WSA on cherrystem roads in Skedaddle and Spencer Creek drainages may occur. Trespass would be use of spring water that occurs on the parcels and/or for camping. Camping could displace or prevent livestock and wildlife that rely on the water sources. Impacts would vary depending upon volumes of wilderness use. This problem presently occurs each fall during hunting season. Since wilderness use is not expected to exceed hunter use, overall adverse impacts incomparison to the present situation are considered negligible.

Conclusion:

Designation of 37,240 acres wilderness would not significantly affect public recreational use of private waters.

Adverse Impacts Which Cannot be Avoided

In the non-designated area, ORVs would lengthen and expand ways, and a Trans Sierra powerline may be built effecting naturalness. In both the designated and non-designated areas, maintenance and construction of livestock facilities would locally affect naturalness and solitude. It is anticipated that any adverse impacts would be minor.

Relationship Between Local Short-Term Uses of Man's Environment and the Maintenance and Enhancement of Long-Term Productivity

For the 26,550 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness, all present, short-term uses would continue. For the WSA there are many ongoing uses including hunting, hiking, livestock grazing, wildlife management, and potentially, a very low level of geothermal exploration. Under the Proposed Action, future development options will remain open on 26,550 acres not designated as wilderness. Long-term productivity throughout the WSA is not likely to be impacted. However, the possibility of activities (for example, increased mineral development) that could reduce long-term productivity is greater on the 26,550 acres not designated wilderness than under wilderness designation. The 47,240 acres recommended for designation would not suffer a long-term reduction of wilderness values.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

No irreversible and irretrievable commitments would be made within the 37,240 acres designated as wilderness. In the 26,550 acres not designated as wilderness, activities such as mining, geothermal leasing and material sales, could create an irreversible commitment of the wilderness resource, if it is not designated as wilderness. However, development is not anticipated now or in the foreseeable future. On the whole, no irreversible or irretrievable commitments of resources are anticipated.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

63,790 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
0 Acres Non-wilderness

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the entire 63,790 acres of public land in the Skedaddle Mountain WSA would be designated as wilderness.

The primary impacts under this alternative are related to impacts on wilderness values, impacts on ORV use, impacts on geothermal resource development and impacts on Trans Sierra utility corridor development.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The All Wilderness Alternative would result in all 63,790 acres of the WSA being protected by legislative mandate. Wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and the supplemental values of topography, vegetation, visual quality, wildlife and cultural resources would also be protected by wilderness management.

Wilderness values would be enhanced by designation of the adjacent Dry Valley Rim WSA that shares a 15 mile common boundary along the Skedaddle Road. In this area, in effect, a larger wilderness would be created separated only by the boundary road.

Naturalness

Livestock grazing and range management actions will not affect naturalness as the levels of use or maintenance activities are not expected to change. Construction of one small stock pond and one well/windmill would locally reduce naturalness at the project site on one acre.

Construction of 6 wildlife guzzlers would locally disturb naturalness on a 30' X 30' area. The low profile 16' X 16', X 3' high structure and camouflaged coloration of guzzlers reduces overall visual contrasts so that the structures are not readily noticeable unless the viewer is close by or overlooking the structure. Increased populations of upland game birds served by the guzzlers should enhance supplemental wilderness values of wildlife.

Off-road vehicle use of 4,200 visitor days per year would be prohibited in the WSA and 47 miles of ways would be closed. However continued use is anticipated on the open slopes on the west, north, and east sides of the WSA despite designation due to the lack of natural barriers and the openness of the terrain. Slight impacts to naturalness would continue in these portions of the WSA.

Naturalness would be adversely impacted by activities of the Sierra Army Depot demolition facility located on the lower southern slopes of the Amedee Mountains adjacent to the WSA. Detonations of ammunition at the Depot facility cause noise, dust and smoke cloud drifts that have adverse affects on naturalness within the WSA. The extent of impacts depend upon wind direction, type of material detonated or burned and frequency of detonation or burning. Single to multiple detonations usually occur within a one-hour period in mid-afternoon.

Adverse impacts to naturalness result from smoke and dust cloud drift across portions of the WSA. Prevailing westerly winds usually send the dissipating cloud eastward or northeastward impacting approximately 10% of the WSA. On it Southeast side. Impacts of detonation blasts are loud explosive sounds similar to sonic booms. Greatest sound impacts from detonations occur on south facing slopes of the Amedee Mountains.

Solitude

Livestock grazing and range management actions would not significantly affect solitude as the levels of use or maintenance activities are not expected to change. Construction of one small stock pond and one well/windmill would locally reduce solitude for the two to three days during construction. Solitude would also occasionally be reduced during spring and late fall when visitors encounter sheep herders, herder camps, trappers and low level aerial flights for predator control and wild horse gathering.

Maintenance of 15 springs, 31 reservoirs and 6 miles of fence would cause slight adverse impacts to solitude. Contacts between visitors and ongoing maintenance activities would be rare because major maintenance would generally occur on a five to fifteen year interval for springs and reservoirs. Annual checks and light maintenance would occur on fences and springs. Annual maintenance would be about 10 trips per year with an additional 30 trips on 5 year cycles to maintain springs and reservoirs.

Construction of 6 wildlife guzzlers would locally disturb solitude for a one or two day period per guzzler during construction. Increased populations of upland game birds served by the guzzlers should enhance supplemental wilderness values of wildlife.

Consequences

Off-road vehicle use would be prohibited in the WSA and 47 miles of ways would be closed. However, continued use is anticipated on the open slopes on the west, north, and east sides of the WSA despite designation due to the lack of natural barriers and the openness of the terrain. Slight impacts to naturalness would continue in these portions of the WSA.

Wilderness values would be adversely impacted by activities of the Sierra Army Depot demolition facility located on the lower southern slopes of the Amedee Mountains adjacent to the WSA. Detonations of ammunition at the Depot facility cause noise, dust and smoke cloud drifts that have adverse affects on solitude within the WSA. The extent of impacts depend upon wind direction, type of material detonated or burned and frequency of detonation or burning. Single to multiple detonations usually occur within a one-hour period in mid-afternoon.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

The opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would remain as they presently exist. Activities most likely to occur would be hiking, horseback riding, rockclimbing and nature study. There would be a slight improvement in the quality of these activities with the removal of 4,200 visitor days of recreational vehicle use from the area.

Special Features

Special features of cliffs and raptors would be within the wilderness area. As these features are currently not threatened by any activities, protection afforded by wilderness would be minimal.

Conclusion:

All wilderness values would receive long-term Congressional protection by precluding utility corridor, geothermal and mineral development. Wilderness values would be slightly enhanced due to reduced ORV use. Periodic impacts on solitude and naturalness would continue.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

With All Wilderness designation, hunter access using ORV travel on 15 miles of roads and 47 miles of ways, as well as cross country on lower slopes of the WSA would be eliminated. Most access routes used by ORVs extend from one to six miles into the WSA. With closure of these routes to vehicles, the added difficulty, increased effort and additional time required to reach these areas on foot or horseback would eliminate many hunters from using the area. This would affect most upland game hunters, particularly chukar hunters, who often hunt on a single day basis. Some individuals committed to multi-day hunts could be expected to expend the additional time and effort needed to access high quality hunting areas within the WSA on foot or horseback.

There would be a loss of 4,200 visitor days of vehicle use on the area.

Conclusion:

Recreational ORV use that occurs in the Skedaddle Mountain WSA would be eliminated. Approximately 4,200 visitor days would be lost. Total ORV use could be absorbed in adjacent non-wilderness areas.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

All lands within the Skedaddle Mountain WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry and mineral leasing. Development of potential mineral resources would be foregone. This includes almost no potential for oil and gas resources and low potential for minerals. It is assumed that no production sufficient to support commercial development would be foregone. Therefore, the impacts on mineral resource development would be negligible.

Conclusion:

Development of potential mineral resources would be foregone. Because there is not any anticipated commercial development of minerals there would be no significant impacts to mineral resource development.

Impacts on Geothermal Resource Development

Geothermal leasing and resource development could not occur. This would affect the 21,540 acres within the WSA considered prospectively valuable for geothermal resources and approximately 1,540 acres within the WSA that are part of the Wendel-Amedee Known Geothermal Resource ARea (KGRA). However, the potential for future development of geothermal resources within the WSA appears to be low due to the relatively low temperature resource known to occur within the KGRA, and the rugged topography that will make future development difficult and costly.

Conclusion:

Wilderness designation of the entire WSA would preclude development of geothermal resources. The impact on geothermal development is slight due to the low development potential of the WSA.

Impacts on the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor

Wilderness designation of the entire WSA would close the WSA to future utility corridor development. The future construction of high voltage powerlines would have to occur at a different location. As the utility companies have indicated that the high priority alignment along the northern side of the WSA is a preferred potential location, it follows that another location would increase costs in construction of a future powerline. The future line would either be longer to reach its destination or over more rugged terrain. As the alternate routes have not been identified, we cannot quantify exactly what the increases would be.

Conclusion:

No utility corridor would be developed in the WSA. Any future powerlines would have to use an alternate route location.

Consequences

Impacts on Private Waters

By designating of the entire WSA wilderness and closing 15 miles of roads and 47 miles of ways, a decrease in hunter visitor days is projected. This should result in a beneficial impact by reducing recreational use of private springs that presently occurs each fall during hunting season.

Conclusion:

Wilderness designation of the entire WSA and associated road and way closures would have a beneficial impact in reducing trespass use of private waters.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

24,510 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
39,280 Acres Non-wilderness

The Partial Wilderness Alternative for the Skedaddle Mountain WSA would designate 24,510 acres as wilderness and 39,280 acres non-wilderness.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to the protection of wilderness values and the loss of wilderness values on portions of the WSA impacted by ORV use and utility corridor development.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Impacts are very similar to impacts described under the Proposed Action/ Partial Wilderness Alternative. The only difference between the alternatives are that under this Partial Wilderness Alternative, the disturbing actions are more impacting on the non-designated than the designated acres because of the 12,730 acres less being recommended for wilderness.

Naturalness

Impacts on the 24,510 acres recommended wilderness would be the same as the Proposed Action.

Impacts on the 39,280 acres recommended non-wilderness would be the same as the Proposed Action.

Solitude

Impacts on the 24,510 acres recommended wilderness and 39,280 acres recommended non-wilderness would be the same as the Proposed Action with the exception that under this Partial Wilderness Alternative, maintenance of livestock facilities within the designated wilderness involve less facilities - 2 springs, 9 reservoirs and 1¼ miles of fence. Impacts on solitude during maintenance activities would be slight in both the designated and non-designated areas. The relative amount of impacts in the area designated wilderness would be less under this alternative than under the Proposed Action/Partial Wilderness Alternative because of fewer facilities within the designated area.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Impacts on the 24,510 acres recommended wilderness and the 39,280 acres recommended non-wilderness would be the same as the Proposed Action.

Special Features

The special features of cliffs and raptor nests would be within the designated area. As these features are currently not threatened by any activities, protection afforded by wilderness would be minimal.

Conclusion:

The 24,510 acres of the Skedaddle Mountain WSA designated as wilderness would receive long-term Congressional protection. Slight adverse impacts to solitude and naturalness would occur on an infrequent basis resulting from livestock use and during livestock facility inspections and maintenance. Periodic impacts on solitude and naturalness caused by activities at the Sierra Army Depot would continue.

Non-designation of 39,280 acres would result in minimal impairment of wilderness characteristics. Existing ways would be kept open and possibly lengthened over time through recreational, livestock operator and trapper use. If a Trans Sierra Utility Corridor alignment is selected through the non-suitable area, utility line development would adversely impact naturalness.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Impacts are similar to impacts on the Proposed Action/Partial Wilderness Alternative with the following differences:

Although approximately 12,000 more acres are not designated wilderness in this alternative, only half or 6,000 acres would provide additional ORV use areas. The remaining 6,000 acres are too steep, rocky or brush covered to allow ORV use. Areas available for ORV use are similar to the non-designated area of the Proposed Action/Partial Wilderness Alternative. ORV access on all major access routes within the WSA remain available.

Conclusion:

Wilderness designation of 24,510 acres will have a negligible adverse impact on recreational ORV use.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

There are no significant differences between impacts of the Proposed Action/Partial Wilderness Alternative and this Partial Wilderness Alternative on mineral resource development. The only difference is that 12,730 more acres would be available for mineral resource development under this alternative. Because of the lack of commercially valuable mineral resources in the WSA, this additional acreage would add little to the potential for mineral development.

Conclusion:

Mineral development would be foregone on 24,510 acres designated wilderness. Low mineral potential indicates negligible impact on future mineral resource development. The remaining 39,280 nonwilderness acres would be available for mineral development, however, likelihood of development appears low.

Impacts on Geothermal Resource Development

There is no significant differences between impacts of the Proposed Action/ Partial Wilderness Alternative and this Partial Wilderness Alternative on geothermal resource development. The only difference is an addition to the non-wilderness area of approximately 2,560 acres of mountainous terrain within the area considered prospectively valuable for geothermal resources. This additional acreage, however, will not make a significant difference in whether or not geothermal resources are developed in the area. Higher potential areas that are less expensive to develop are available outside the WSA.

Conclusion:

Wilderness designation would eliminate future exploration and development on 24,510 acres designated wilderness. Impact on geothermal resource development is considered minimal.

Impacts on the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor

Two potential utility corridor alignments could be developed through the non-suitable portion of the WSA. If selected for development, approximately 7 miles of overhead high voltage powerline and 7 miles of associated service road could be developed through the northern end of the WSA as part of a high priority Trans Sierra utility corridor identified by the utility industry. Approximately 7,000 acres would be affected. Approximately 10 miles of a second lower priority alignment along the WSA's eastern side could also be utilized as sufficient area is available in the non-wilderness portion of this alternative to allow for powerline construction. Approximately 10,000 acres would be affected.

Conclusion:

Wilderness designation on 24,510 acres would not prevent construction of a high priority utility corridor alignment through the northern end of the WSA. Sufficient area is also available in the nonwilderness area on the WSA's east side to allow for construction of a lower priority utility corridor alignment if needed.

Impacts on Private Waters

Public recreational use of 9 parcels of private land within or adjacent to the WSA on cherrystem roads in Skedaddle and Spencer Creek drainages may occur. Trespass would be use of spring water that occurs on the parcels and/or for camping. Camping could displace or prevent livestock and wildlife that rely on the water sources. Impacts would vary depending

upon volumes of wilderness use. This problem presently occurs each fall during hunting season. Since wilderness use is not expected to exceed hunter use, overall adverse impacts incomparison to the present situation are considered negligible.

Conclusion:

Designation of 24,510 acres wilderness would not significantly affect public recreational use of private waters.

NO WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

0 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
63,790 Acres Non-wilderness

None of the 63,790 acre Skedaddle Mountain WSA would be designated as wilderness.

The primary impacts of the No Wilderness Alternative relate to impacts to wilderness values.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The entire 63,790 acre WSA would not be designated as wilderness and none of the wilderness values would be protected by legislative action. The short-term impact of this action would be negligible since little development activity is anticipated in the short-term.

Naturalness

Development of one stock pond reservoir and one well/windmill would locally impact naturalness. The reservoir would be located in a small drainage visually screened from adjacent areas. Natural re-vegetation would gradually reduce the unnatural appearance of the earthen dam. Longterm impact would be slight. Well construction would disturb a 50' X 50' area during the two to three day period of drilling. The primary adverse impact on naturalness would be the 30' windmill used to pump the water. This would be visible for approximately a one mile radius around the well on the alluvial slope where the well is located. Overall adverse impact on naturalness would be slight.

Construction of 6 wildlife guzzlers would locally disturb naturalness on a 30' X 30' area. The low profile 16' X 16', X 3' high structure and camouflaged coloration of guzzlers reduces overall visual contrasts so that the structures are not readily noticeable unless the viewer is close by or overlooking the structure. Increased populations of upland game birds served by the guzzlers should enhance supplemental wilderness values of wildlife.

Off-road vehicle users continuing to travel existing access ways and roads and drive cross country to hunting areas would cause slight to moderate adverse impacts to naturalness during the fall. Overall impacts on naturalness would be slight, but would increase gradually as roads and ways are lengthened over time through repeated use.

Consequences

If mineral exploration and development occurred, wilderness values of naturalness could be adversely impacted. However, there is no past history of mineral development of any significance in the WSA and based on no known commercial potential in the WSA, no development is expected in the foreseeable future. Two placer claims filed in 1985 in T.30N., R.16E., Sections 10 and 11, near the northern boundary of the WSA have not been developed. If developed, naturalness would be altered in the area of the claims. Saleable minerals (ancient lake bed deposits) located around the west and southern edges of the non-designated area have also not been utilized for many years as other higher quality or more accessible deposits are available. Mineral development is not anticipated in the WSA, therefore, adverse impacts to naturalness are not anticipated.

If geothermal resource development occurs on 1,520 acres of the Wendel Amedee KGRA located in the WSA, adverse impacts to naturalness would result. However, no interest has been shown in this portion of the KGRA within the WSA for leasing or development. Steep slopes, cliffs and alternate, more accessible areas under development outside the WSA contribute to the low probability of development of geothermal resources within the WSA. Should geothermal exploration occur, it is anticipated that 10 acres of surface disturbance and 2 miles of access road construction would have a small but noticeable adverse impact on the perception of naturalness within a 300 acre area near the base of Wendel Cliffs. This area is not visible from the majority of the WSA.

In the event that geothermal resource production would be realized, development facilities would occur outside the WSA to allow utilization of a potentially larger steam field outside the WSA. Terrain becomes very gentle west of the WSA.

Portions of two utility corridor alignments could be developed through the WSA. If selected for development, approximately 7 miles of overhead high voltage powerline and 7 miles of associated service road could be developed through the northern end of the WSA as part of a high priority Trans Sierra utility corridor identified by the utility industry. The perception of naturalness on approximately 7,000 acres would be diminished as a result of surface disturbance for the towers and roads as well as the presence of the powerline. Approximately 10 miles of a second lower priority alignment along the WSA's eastern side could also be utilized, reducing the perception of naturalness on 10,000 acres.

Gathering of wild horses would have an indirect slight benefit on naturalness by reducing the potential for over grazing. Location of one trap site within the non-designated portion of the WSA ½ mile from the boundary road would locally alter naturalness during the few days necessary for gathering.

Naturalness would be adversely impacted by activities of the Sierra Army Depot demolition facility located on the lower southern slopes of the Amedee Mountains adjacent to the WSA. Detonations of ammunition at the Depot facility cause noise, dust and smoke cloud drifts that have adverse affects on naturalness within the WSA. The extent of impacts depend upon wind direction, type of material detonated or burned and frequency of detonation or burning. Single to multiple detonations usually occur within a one-hour period in mid-afternoon.

Adverse impacts to naturalness result from smoke and dust clouds drifting across portions of the WSA. Prevailing westerly winds usually send the dissipating cloud eastward or northeastward impacting approximately 10% of the WSA. On it Southeast side. Impacts of detonation blasts are loud explosive sounds similar to sonic booms. Greatest sound impacts from detonations occur on south facing slopes of the Amedee Mountains.

Solitude

Livestock grazing and range management actions would not significantly affect solitude as the levels of use on maintenance activities are not expected to change. Maintenance of 15 springs, 31 reservoirs and 6 miles of fence would cause slight adverse impacts on solitude. Contacts between visitors and ongoing maintenance activities would be rare because major maintenance would generally occur on a five to fifteen year interval for springs and reservoirs. Annual checks and light maintenance would occur on fences and springs. Solitude would also irregularly be impaired during spring and late fall when visitors encounter sheep herders, herder camps, vehicles used to supply and move camps, trappers and low level aerial flights for predator control.

Development of one stock pond reservoir and one well/windmill would locally disturb solitude for a two to three day period/site during construction. The reservoir would be located in a small drainage visually screened from adjacent areas. Natural re-vegetation would gradually reduce the unnatural appearance of the earthen dam. Long-term impact would be slight. Well construction would disturb a 50' X 50' area during the two to three day period of drilling. The primary adverse impact on solitude would be the 30' windmill used to pump the water. This would be visible for approximately a one mile radius around the well on the alluvial slope where the well is located. Maintenance of these two range improvements would add 1 trip per year to the existing maintenance of 10 trips annually, and an additional 30 trips on a 5 year cycle for major maintenance of springs and reservoirs.

Construction of 6 wildlife guzzlers on a 30' X 30' area would locally disturb solitude for a one or two day period per guzzler during construction. The low profile 16' X 16' X 3' high structure and camouflaged coloration of guzzlers reduces overall visual contrasts so that the structures are not readily noticeable unless the viewer is close by or overlooking the structure. Increased populations of upland game birds served by the guzzlers should enhance supplemental wilderness values of wildlife.

Off-road vehicle users continuing to travel existing access ways and roads and drive cross country to hunting areas would cause slight to moderate adverse impacts to solitude during the fall. ORV impacts on solitude will be influenced primarily by hunting season regulations (season of use, number of permits issued).

If mineral exploration and development occurred, opportunities for solitude could be adversely impacted. However, there is no past history of mineral development of any significance in the WSA and based on no known commercial potential in the WSA, no development is expected in the foreseeable future. Two placer claims filed in 1985 in T.30N., R.16E., Sections 10 and 11, near the northern boundary of the WSA have not been developed. If

developed, solitude would be disrupted in the area of the claims during operations. Saleable minerals (ancient lake bed deposits) located around the west and southern edges of the non-designated area have also not been utilized for many years as other higher quality or more accessible deposits are available. Mineral development is not anticipated in the WSA, therefore, adverse impacts to wilderness qualities are not anticipated.

If geothermal resource development occurs on 1,520 acres of the Wendel Amedee KGRA located in the WSA, adverse impacts to solitude would result. Geothermal exploration within the KGRA in the southwest portion of the WSA would result in 10 acres of surface disturbance and 2 miles of access road construction. The exploration would have only a slight impact on solitude over an area of approximately 300 acres along the base of Wendel Cliffs. This area is isolated from the great majority of the WSA.

Gathering of wild horses with helicopters and herding the horses to trap sites would negligibly reduce solitude for visitors when the helicopter was actually nearby. This would only occur on a three to four year interval for a few days at a time. Location of one trap site within the non-designated portion of the WSA ½ mile from the boundary road would locally disturb solitude during the few days necessary for gathering.

Predator control activities would reduce solitude during the period that control activities are being carried out. This is not anticipated to be a significant impact because there has been no history of visitor use on the portions of the WSA receiving predator control when the control occurs.

Solitude would be adversely impacted by activities of the Sierra Army Depot demolition facility located on the lower southern slopes of the Amedee Mountains adjacent to the WSA. Detonations of ammunition at the Depot facility cause noise, dust and smoke cloud drifts that have adverse affects on solitude within the WSA. The extent of impacts depend upon wind direction, type of material detonated or burned and frequency of detonation or burning. Single to multiple detonations usually occur within a one-hour period in mid-afternoon.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would continue as they presently exist throughout most of the area. Hiking, horseback riding, rockclimbing and nature study are the main activities. In the steep topography around Skedaddle and Amedee Mountain, there will be no change from the present situation. The quality of these activities would be lessened as a result of geothermal exploration within the 500 acres of the Wendel KGRA. The impact of the potential powerline could reduce opportunities on up to 17,000 acres if all 17 miles of study corridor were developed.

Special Features

Impacts to the special features of cliffs, scenic quality and raptors are not foreseen. The cliffs are not threatened by mining or other developments, and the raptors are generally located in inaccessible areas. Raptors have continually habituated this WSA and it is not anticipated that non-designation would cause adverse impacts.

Conclusion:

The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude, and primitive recreation throughout the majority of the WSA would be slightly reduced as a result of continued livestock grazing activities and ORV use . Over the long-term, geothermal exploration, and potential development of the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor would contribute to the impairment of wilderness values on up to 17,500 acres. Periodic impacts on solitude caused by activities at the Sierra Army Depot would continue.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

The entire WSA would be open to recreational ORV use. Over the longterm, use would not significantly change from the current estimated 4,200 annual use days.

Conclusion:

Recreational ORV use would be expected to remain near current use levels. There would be no impact on recreational ORV use.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

All lands within the WSA would remain open for mineral entry and mineral leasing. All potential resources would be available for development. Two placer mining claims near the northern side of the WSA could be developed. However, low mineral potential throughout the WSA and no past record of significant mineral exploration or development indicates low probability of future development of commercially valuable mineral resources within the WSA.

Conclusion:

There would be no impacts on mineral resource development. However the probability of development is considered low.

Impact on Geothermal Resource Development

Development of geothermal resources could occur, but appears unlikely. No geothermal leases occur in the area despite 21,540 acres of the WSA considered prospectively valuable for geothermal and 1,520 acres of the WSA located within the Wendel-Amedee Known Geothermal Resource Area. Rugged terrain would make development costly within the WSA. Alternate, more accessible sites are available nearby outside the WSA.

Conclusion:

Geothermal exploration and development could occur. Probability of development appears low.

Impacts on the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor

Two proposed utility corridor alignments through the WSA's north and east sides would be available for future construction of high voltage powerlines.

Consequences

Conclusion:

There would be no impacts on the Trans Sierra utility corridor.

Impacts on Private Waters

Public recreational use of 9 parcels of private land within or adjacent to the WSA on cherrystem roads in Skedaddle Creek and Spencer Creek drainages would continue to occur. This use would be for the use of spring water that occurs on the parcels and for camping. Camping currently displaces or prevents livestock and wildlife that rely on the water sources. The problem presently occurs each fall during hunting season. Since current use levels are not expected to increase, the present situation will continue.

Conclusion:

Non-designation of the entire WSA as wilderness would not effect the present situation of private waters. Current use of private waters will continue.

DRY VALLEY RIM
(CA-020-615)

PROPOSED ACTION (PARTIAL WILDERNESS)

52,845 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
42,180 Acres Non-wilderness

The Proposed Action would designate 52,845 acres as wilderness with the remaining 42,180 acres of the WSA as non-wilderness. The primary impacts under this proposal relate to mineral withdrawal and ORV closure in the designated wilderness, the resulting effects on mineral development and recreational ORV use, as well as the beneficial and adverse effects on wilderness values.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Under the Proposed Action, 52,845 acres would receive legislative protection for all wilderness values including the distinctive seventeen mile long Dry Valley Rim, an escarpment which abruptly rises 1,500 feet above the Smoke Creek Desert. Wilderness values of naturalness, solitude and opportunities for primitive recreation would be retained on this portion of the WSA.

Wilderness values on the remaining 42,180 acres would be subjected to effects of multiple-use resource management, including mineral resource development and recreational ORV use.

Wilderness values would be enhanced by a common boundary with an adjacent WSA designated area. The west side of the Dry Valley Rim designated area forms a 4 3/4 mile common boundary with the area recommended for designation under the Proposed Action for Skedaddle WSA. This, in effect, creates a larger wilderness separated only by a 600' space along the boundary road. This would afford Congressional protection of wilderness values on two adjacent designated areas.

Naturalness

There would be a slight positive benefit to naturalness as a result of closure of 52,845 acres, including 12 miles of vehicle ways which would eliminate 800 visitor days annually of recreational ORV use. There are no livestock facilities or other surface disturbing activities projected within the designated portion of the WSA. Livestock use would be maintained at the existing level of 2,200 AUMs and would not affect the WSA's existing natural character.

On 42,180 acres in the non-wilderness portion of the WSA livestock use would be maintained at the existing level of 1,821 AUMs and would not affect existing natural character in this portion of the WSA. Three additional livestock reservoirs are planned in the non-wilderness portion of the WSA, each requiring approximately 2/3 acre of surface disturbance. Two of the reservoirs are planned for the eastern portion of the WSA below the escarpment and would only impair the perception of naturalness to an area less than 10 acres each. The third reservoir would be located in a narrow drainage in the southern portion of the WSA and would locally affect the perception of naturalness on approximately 5 acres.

In the non-designated area, surface disturbance and mining activities associated with an open pit diatomite mine in the northeastern portion of the WSA below the Dry Valley Rim escarpment would result in a direct loss of naturalness within the 150 acre project site. An existing cherrystemmed road would provide access to the mine and no new access would be developed. Since the mine would be visible from portions of the escarpment within the WSA, the perception of naturalness would be lost within an area of approximately 4,000 acres due to the visual contrasts of the mine with the natural landscape.

Development of a sand and gravel site would occur in the non-wilderness portion of the WSA. The deposits would be mined from the dry lake bed in the southwest corner of the WSA and would result in the loss of naturalness on 20 acres. The site is adjacent to the WSA boundary and would only require improvement of less than ¼ mile of existing way for access. The perception of naturalness would only be locally impaired on less than 100 acres due to the gently sloping topography and would not affect the wilderness portion of the WSA.

Development of the Trans Sierra utility corridor would most likely occur in the study corridor that follows 6 miles of the northwest boundary of the WSA. Actual construction of a high voltage transmission line would occur in portions of the study corridor outside the WSA to utilize existing

access and avoid the more dissected topography of this portion of the WSA. An additional transmission line would be developed within the study corridor that follows the eastern boundary of 9 miles. Again, actual construction would occur mostly outside the WSA along the western edge of the Smoke Creek Desert to the east, taking advantage of existing access and avoiding the steep, rugged slopes of the escarpment. Construction within the WSA would most likely occur below the easternmost escarpment affecting naturalness on approximately 2,000 acres on the eastern edge of the WSA.

Continued use of 35 miles of ORV trail by 3,200 visitors annually would reduce the perception of naturalness in the immediate vicinity of the trails due to continued surface disturbance.

Dust and smoke clouds associated with the almost daily detonation of explosives at the Sierra Army Depot's disposal area 2 miles to the southwest of the WSA would impair naturalness for short periods of time. The clouds drift, and often linger over approximately 6,000 acres of the southern portion of the WSA.

Solitude

Opportunities for solitude would improve on 52,845 acres in the designated portion of the WSA primarily as a result of the elimination of 800 visitor days of recreational ORV use. While contact between ORV users and other users is infrequent, there would be only a slight positive affect due to closure of the area to recreational ORV use.

Livestock maintenance activities in the designated portion of the WSA would remain at existing levels of approximately 10 vehicle trips annually. Sheepherding camps would continue to require vehicle support in the spring and fall with no increase in use projected. Existing low level predator control flights would also continue in spring and fall in conjunction with the sheepherding. Therefore, livestock grazing activities are not anticipated to cause any additional disruption of solitude over the existing use levels in the designated portion of the WSA.

On the 42,180 acres of the WSA not proposed for wilderness, construction of 3 livestock reservoirs would result in up to 4 vehicle trips over a 2 to 3 day period for each reservoir. Solitude would be disrupted for other recreation users in the vicinity of the construction sites and along the access ways. However, contact with other users would be minimal since these reservoirs are planned for the eastern and southern portions of the WSA, while recreation use is concentrated primarily along Dry Valley Rim in the central portion of the WSA.

Livestock maintenance activities would continue with approximately 15 vehicle trips annually, plus an additional 2 vehicle trips every 5 years for cyclic maintenance of the 3 new reservoirs. This increase would have only a marginal affect on solitude.

Mining activities associated with the diatomite open pit mine would noticeably reduce opportunities for solitude along the northern portion of

the Dry Valley Rim escarpment. Sights and sounds of traffic and construction related to the mine would eliminate outstanding opportunities for solitude on approximately 4,000 acres.

Development of the 20 acre sand and gravel site in the southwest corner of the WSA is away from primary visitor use areas and would only marginally affect solitude. The site is also adjacent to a locally used road along the boundary of the WSA. Mining of this site would not significantly reduce solitude beyond existing levels.

Recreational ORV use in the non-wilderness portion of the WSA is primarily associated with hunting and occurs along 35 miles of vehicle ways that penetrate the WSA along its perimeter. Solitude would be disturbed along these vehicle ways by recreational ORV use of 3,200 visitor days annually, which are concentrated during the fall hunting season. Less than 20% of the recreational ORV use occurs throughout the remainder of the year and results in only a slight reduction of solitude during infrequent contact with other recreation users in the vicinity of the access ways.

Wild horses and burros would be gathered from the WSA every 3 to 4 years. A helicopter would be used to herd the animals to a trap site just inside the southwestern corner of the WSA in the non-wilderness portion. Solitude would be disrupted over a 2 to 3 day period while the herding occurs and the animals are trucked out of the WSA. However, recreation use is limited in this portion of the WSA and impacts on solitude would be negligible.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation throughout the designated portion of the WSA would be slightly improved as no development activities are projected and 800 visitor days of recreational ORV use would be eliminated.

In the non-wilderness portion of the WSA development of the diatomite open pit mine on 150 acres along the east escarpment would diminish opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation along the northern portion of Dry Valley Rim and its steep, short canyons by increasing mining activity in the area.

Special Features

Wilderness protection for the Dry Valley Rim escarpment would result in a minor benefit to scenic quality by eliminating recreational ORV use from this portion of the WSA. Off-road vehicle use has the potential for surface disturbances that would create unnatural visual contrasts resulting in impacts to the scenic quality of the area.

Conclusion:

Designation of 52,845 acres as wilderness would result in a net benefit to the area's wilderness values, particularly naturalness and solitude, due to the elimination of 800 visitor days of recreational

ORV use annually. The WSA's most spectacular scenery and wildlife habitat along the escarpment, as well as its naturalness, solitude and opportunities for primitive recreation would be retained.

On the 42,180 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a slight reduction in naturalness and solitude because of continued ORV use of 3,200 visitor days annually. Dust and smoke clouds from explosions at the Sierra Army Depot would diminish naturalness on 6,000 acres. The perception of naturalness and solitude would be lost on 4,000 acres as a result of development of a 150 acre open pit mine. Development of the sand and gravel site and new range improvements would result in only slight localized reductions in naturalness and solitude.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

Under the Proposed Action, 52,845 acres would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry and the development of the potential mineral resources would be foregone on this 52,845 acres. However, no mineral values of large or commercial quantities are known to exist in this portion of the WSA. Perlite deposits in the WSA are considered to have a low development potential and would not likely be developed with or without wilderness designation due to inaccessibility of the deposits, distance to a commercial market, and the availability of deposits with higher potential in more accessible locations outside the WSA.

The remaining 42,180 acres not proposed to be designated wilderness would be open to mineral resource exploration and development. A 150 acre open pit mine would be developed on the five diatomite claims along the east escarpment of Dry Valley Rim. In the southwest corner of the WSA, a 20 acre sand and gravel deposit would be commercially extracted. No other large or commercial quantities of minerals are known to exist in the WSA.

Conclusion:

There would be no impact on mineral resource development. Known deposits of diatomite and sand and gravel would be available for development.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Under the Proposed Action, the 52,845 acres designated wilderness would be closed to ORV use. This includes 12 miles of ways used for ORV access into popular hunting areas, as well as for casual ORV recreation. Recreational ORV use of 800 visitor days would be eliminated from this portion of the WSA. Public land that offers similar opportunities is available outside the WSA. Therefore, recreational use foregone in the WSA would be absorbed on surrounding public lands.

In the 42,180 acres not designated wilderness, ORV use would continue and 35 miles of trail would remain open for use with no regular maintenance, except to ensure access to range improvements. Recreation use would increase slightly by 200 visitor days resulting from use displaced by designation of a portion of the WSA as wilderness.

Overall, recreational ORV use in the WSA would be reduced by 800 visitor days from the current use of 4,000 visitor days to a projected total of 3,200 visitor days.

Conclusion:

Recreational ORV use would be eliminated on 52,845 acres, including 800 visitor days which would be displaced from the WSA. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

Impacts on Trans Sierra Utility Corridor

Under the Proposed Action, the designation of 52,845 acres as wilderness would eliminate the availability of 9 miles of the transmission corridor under study for the proposed Trans Sierra utility corridor in the southwest portion of the WSA. This study corridor is not considered to have a high priority at this point in the planning process. Two other corridors under study would not be affected by wilderness designation. One corridor is located along 10 miles of the eastern edge of the WSA in the non-wilderness portion. The other corridor follows 6 miles of the northwest boundary of the WSA also outside of wilderness portion of the WSA. Actual development of either of these two corridors would most likely occur outside the WSA in order to utilize existing access and more gentle topography.

Conclusion:

One of three utility corridors under study that passes through 9 miles of the WSA would be eliminated from consideration for potential development. The other two corridors under study would be available for development.

Adverse Impacts Which Cannot be Avoided

The wilderness value of naturalness would be unavoidably lost on the areas developed for the diatomite mine, the gravel pit, corridors in which powerlines are constructed, and the 2/3 acre at each of the 3 proposed livestock reservoirs. Solitude is temporarily and unavoidably impaired whenever a vehicle is encountered in the undesignated portion. It is also temporarily impaired in both designated and non-designated portions when aircraft is used for predator control and wild horse gathering.

Relationship Between Local Short-Term Uses of Man's Environment and the Maintenance and Enhancement of Productivity

The productivity of the 150 acres of land where the open pit diatomite mine is and the 20 acres where sand and gravel is removed would be lost for the long-term. The productivity of the remainder of the area would be maintained and not significantly affected.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

The only resources which when committed would be irretrievable are the diatomite and sand and gravel that would be removed from the non-designated portion. The wilderness value of naturalness of these disturbed areas would also be lost.

Consequences

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

95,025 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
0 Acres Non-wilderness

The All Wilderness Alternative designates the entire 95,025 acres of public land in the Dry Valley Rim WSA as wilderness.

The primary impacts under this alternative are related to recreational vehicle closures and non-development of utility corridors, as well as the beneficial protection of wilderness values.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The all wilderness alternative would result in all 95,025 acres of the WSA being protected by legislative mandate. Wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and the supplemental values of topography, vegetation, visual quality, wildlife and cultural resources would also be protected by wilderness management.

Wilderness values would be enhanced by designation of the adjacent Skedaddle WSA that shares a 15 mile common boundary along the Skedaddle Road. Wilderness values would also be enhanced by designation of the adjacent Five Springs WSA that shares a 5 mile common boundary along the Dry Valley Rim WSA's northwest side. In these areas, in effect, a larger wilderness would be created separated only by the boundary roads.

Naturalness

There would be a positive benefit to naturalness as a result of closure of 95,025 acres, including 47 miles of vehicle ways which would eliminate 4,000 visitor days annually of recreational ORV use. Some of the ways would continue to be used several times a year for operation and maintenance of the grazing activity. Over a long period of time, the ways would become less and less noticeable. Due to the fact that they do not have cuts, fills or a graded roadbed, they are not very noticeable to begin with.

Livestock use would be maintained at the existing level of 4,021 AUMs and would not affect the WSA's existing natural character. Three additional livestock reservoirs are planned in the WSA, each requiring approximately 2/3 acre of surface disturbance. Two of the reservoirs are planned for the eastern portion of the WSA below the escarpment and would only impair the perception of naturalness to an area of less than 10 acres each. The third reservoir would be located in a narrow drainage in the southern portion of the WSA and would locally affect the perception of naturalness on 5 acres.

Dust and smoke clouds associated with the almost daily detonation of explosives and the Sierra Army Depot's disposal area 2 miles to the southwest of the WSA would temporarily impair naturalness for short periods of time. The clouds drift, and often linger for an hour or two over approximately 6,000 acres of the southern portion of the WSA.

Solitude

Opportunities for solitude would improve on 95,025 acres of the WSA as a result of the elimination of 4,000 visitor days of recreational ORV use. Presently, contact with vehicles is infrequent, on an average of one per day, except during hunting seasons when a visitor would encounter 3 or 4 vehicles in a day. On the western side of the WSA the topography is flat to slightly sloping and all the vegetation is low grasses and sagebrush. The area does not have natural barriers to prevent vehicles from leaving the boundary roads and a low level of trespass activity by vehicles would occur lowering solitude in this area.

Impacts on solitude from livestock grazing, maintenance of range improvements and wild horse and burro activities would be the same as discussed in both the designated and non-designated portions of the Proposed Action.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Opportunities for hiking, horseback riding and nature study, the primary primitive and unconfined types of recreation in the WSA, would not change appreciably. The quality of those experiences would be slightly improved by the removal of 4,000 visitor days of vehicle based recreation.

Special Features

These impacts on the Dry Valley Rim escarpment would be the same as stated in the Proposed Action alternative.

Conclusion:

All wilderness values would receive long-term Congressional protection. Wilderness values would be slightly enhanced over present levels due to removal of 4,000 visitor days of vehicle travel. Noise, smoke, and dust from demolition activities would continue from the Sierra Army Depot.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Wilderness designation would close the entire 95,025 acres in the WSA, including 47 miles of ways to recreational ORV use. Recreational ORV use of 4,000 visitor days annually would be eliminated from the WSA. Public land that offers similar opportunities for recreational ORV use is located throughout the region. Therefore, recreational ORV use foregone in the WSA would be absorbed on surrounding public lands and not reduce the ORV use or opportunity in the District.

The Lassen Motorcycle Club Enduro event would be displaced from the WSA. This would involve relocating 4 miles of trail used in the 100 mile event to a location outside the WSA, resulting in negligible impacts.

Conclusion:

Recreational ORV use of 4,000 visitor days annually would be foregone with the closure of all 95,025 acres and 47 miles of ways in the

WSA. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

The All Wilderness Alternative would close all 95,025 acres of the WSA to all forms of mineral entry pending valid existing rights. It is anticipated that the 6 existing mining claims in the WSA would not meet validity requirements due to lack of known mineral discovery. Therefore, the development of potential mineral resources would be foregone over the entire WSA. This includes a 150 acre open pit mine for diatomite and a 20 acre sand and gravel site that would not be developed under this alternative. Perlite deposits in the WSA are considered to have a low development potential would not likely be developed with or without wilderness designation due to the inaccessibility of the deposits, distance to a commercial market, and deposits with higher potential exist in more accessible locations outside the WSA.

Conclusion:

Development of potential mineral resources in the WSA would be foregone. Known deposits of diatomite and sand and gravel would not be available for development.

Impacts on Trans Sierra Utility Corridor

The All Wilderness Alternative would preclude development of all three study corridors for the Trans Sierra utility corridor proposed within the WSA. Only the 9 mile corridor in the southwestern portion of the WSA would be eliminated. However, the corridor could possibly be relocated to the west, just outside the WSA boundary. The other two study corridors are along 10 miles of the eastern boundary and 6 miles of northwestern boundary of the WSA and include lands outside the WSA. While wilderness designation would restrict the width of these 3 to 5 mile corridors, potential development could still occur within the remaining 1 to 2 mile corridors outside the WSA where development is mostly due to existing access and topography which is more gentle.

Conclusion:

Wilderness designation could restrict, but would not preclude, potential development of the proposed Trans Sierra utility corridor. The southwestern utility corridor under study would be eliminated from consideration for development. The two other corridors would be available for development on lands outside the WSA.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

36,545 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
58,480 Acres Non-wilderness

The Partial Wilderness Alternative designates 36,545 acres as wilderness and 58,480 acres as non-wilderness.

The primary impacts under this alternative are related to wilderness values and utility corridor management.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The Partial Wilderness Alternative would result in 36,545 acres of the WSA being protected by legislative mandate. Wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and the supplemental values of topography, vegetation, visual quality, wildlife and cultural resources would also be protected by wilderness management.

Naturalness

Naturalness would not be changed from the existing situation as a result of the closure of 36,545 acres from recreation vehicles in the designated wilderness area. None of the 47 miles of ways are in the closed area. The area consists of the rough and rugged topography where vehicles have not been able to travel. In the non-suitable area the existing levels of use (4,000 visitor days) are expected to remain stable for the foreseeable future. This would maintain the existing 47 miles of ways in their present condition of low visual impact due to the fact they do not have cuts, fills or graded surfaces.

There are no livestock facilities or other surface disturbing activities projected within the designated portion of the WSA. Livestock use would be maintained at the existing level of 1,546 AUMs and would not effect the WSAs existing natural character. In the non-designated portion of the WSA, livestock use would remain at the existing level of 2,475 AUMs. The addition of three livestock reservoirs in the non-designated portion would have the same impacts described in the Proposed Action.

The impacts on naturalness from a diatomite mine, sand and gravel site, utility corridors and smoke clouds from the Sierra Army Depot would all be in the non-designated 58,480 acres and would be the same as described in the Proposed Action.

Solitude

Opportunity for solitude would not change on the 36,545 acres of the designated area from the existing situation. The designated area is the most rugged portion of the WSA and very little disturbance is encountered there. No vehicle ways or recreational vehicle use are presently found in this area due to its rough and rugged topography.

In the non-designated portion of 58,480 acres, recreational vehicle use is expected to remain at existing levels of 4,000 visitor days per year for the foreseeable future. Presently, contact with vehicles is infrequent, on an average of one vehicle per day except during hunting seasons when a visitor would encounter 3 or 4 vehicles in a day.

Existing low level aircraft flights will occur in the spring and fall for a day or two each for predator control in conjunction with sheepherding and for a day or two every 3 or 4 years for wild horse roundup. The same is true for aircraft flights over the non-designated area.

Consequences

The impacts on solitude in the non-designated area for construction and maintenance of range improvement structures, diatomite claim development, sand and gravel pit development and wild horse trap site activity is the same as for the Proposed Action.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

In the area designated as wilderness, the opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would remain as they presently exist. Activities most likely to occur would be hiking, horseback riding and nature study. Most activity would occur in the spring as the summers are hot and dry with the only water to be found over most of the area being in a few livestock reservoirs. In the non-wilderness portion of the WSA, development of the diatomite open pit mine on 150 acres below the east escarpment and the construction of a utility powerline on 2,000 acres along the eastern boundary would diminish the opportunity for primitive and unconfined recreation in those areas.

Special Features

The Dry Valley Rim escarpment would be in the area designated as wilderness. It would retain its undisturbed natural condition. It is very rugged topography with the scenic escarpment that has prohibited development by man.

Conclusion:

Designation of 36,545 acres of wilderness would retain that area in its present undeveloped condition. The WSA's most spectacular scenery and wildlife habitat along the Dry Valley Rim escarpment would be retained.

On the 58,480 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a slight impairment of solitude and naturalness due to the continued ORV use of 4,000 visitor days annually. Dust and smoke clouds from explosions at the Sierra Army Depot would diminish naturalness on 6,000 acres. The perception of naturalness and solitude would be lost on 4,000 acres as a result of development of a 150 acre open pit diatomite mine. The perception of naturalness and solitude would also be lost on 2,000 acres due to construction of a utility powerline along the extreme east edge of the WSA. Development of the sand and gravel site and 3 livestock reservoirs would result in only slight localized reductions in naturalness and solitude.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

This alternative would close 36,545 acres to ORV use. However, none of the 47 miles of vehicle ways used for hunting access or casual ORV use are located in this portion of the WSA resulting in no trail closures or reduction in visitor use. Recreational ORV use of 4,000 visitor days would continue in the remaining 58,480 acres where the majority of use is presently occurring. The Lassen Motorcycle Club Enduro event would continue to use its present course including 4 miles in the WSA.

Conclusion:

Wilderness designation would not change ORV use levels and would not result in closure of any vehicle ways.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

The impacts to mineral resource development under this Partial Wilderness Alternative would be the same as those described for the Proposed Action, except that 36,545 acres would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry while 58,480 acres would remain open to mineral exploration and development. Projected development of the 150 acre open pit mine for diatomite and the 20 acre sand and gravel deposit would remain.

Conclusion:

There would be no impact to mineral resource development. Known deposits of diatomite and sand and gravel would be available for development.

Impacts on Trans Sierra Utility Corridor

The impacts on the 3 study corridors for the proposed Trans Sierra utility corridor in this WSA would be the same as those described under the Proposed Action.

Conclusion:

One study corridor that passes through 9 miles of the WSA would be eliminated from consideration for potential development. The other two corridors under study would be available for development for the proposed Trans Sierra utility corridor.

NO WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

0 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
95,025 Acres Non-wilderness

The No Wilderness Alternative does not designate any land as wilderness in the Dry Valley Rim WSA.

The primary impacts of this alternative relate to impacts on wilderness values.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The entire 95,025 acre WSA would not be designated as wilderness and none of the wilderness values would be protected by legislative action.

Naturalness

The area would be open to recreational vehicle use. The existing 47 miles of vehicle ways would continue to be used. The existing level of use of

approximately 4,000 visitor days is expected to remain at or near that level for the foreseeable future. The ways are primitive routes whose impacts are localized to the immediate vicinity of the way. This is because they do not have cuts, fills or graded road beds which would be much more visible. The existing areas that do not have ways (36,545 acres) are not likely to have new vehicle routes in the future as this area is the most rugged topography in the WSA.

Livestock use would be maintained for the immediate future at 4,021 AUMs in the WSA. The range condition will be monitored and adjustments in type of grazing system or numbers of AUMs, either up or down depending on the results of the present allotment management plans. The impacts of the three planned livestock reservoirs would be the same as discussed in the Pro- posed Action.

The impacts on naturalness from development of the diatomite mine, sand and gravel site, utility powerlines and the dust clouds from Sierra Army Depot's demolition area are the same as discussed for the Proposed Action.

Solitude

The impacts on opportunities for solitude from recreational vehicle use would remain much as they are now in the existing situation. Recreational vehicles would use the 47 miles of existing ways and a visitor to the area would most likely encounter one or two vehicles per day during the spring and summer. In the fall, during hunting seasons, a visitor might encounter three or four vehicles in a day, particularly on weekends. Use levels are expected to remain at or near 4,000 visitor days per year for recreation vehicles.

Livestock operation and maintenance activities would remain at existing levels of approximately 25 trips per year. These trips are to maintain springs and reservoirs, move and re-supply sheep camps, distribute salt and maintain fences. Solitude would also be disrupted temporarily for a couple of days in th spring and fall for low level predator control flights.

The impacts from constructing 3 planned livestock reservoirs, diatomite mining, sand and gravel extraction, and wild horse and burro gathering would be the same as discussed in the Proposed Action.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would be impaired on the 4,000 acres where the open pit diatomite mine was discernible. This is also true for the 2,000 acres on the eastern side of the WSA below the lower escarpment that would be affected by construction of a utility powerline. In the remainder of the area, the opportunities for hiking, horseback riding and nature study would remain the same as presently exists.

Special Features

The Dry Valley Rim escarpment would not have any physical impacts placed on it in the foreseeable future. This is due to the steep, rugged nature of the topography. The diatomite mine and utility powerline would be visible below the northern end of the rim. The rim itself would not be disturbed, but the view from the rim would be changed.

Conclusion:

The core area of Dry Valley Rim (36,545 acres) that is too rough and rugged for vehicles would not change in the foreseeable future. Wilderness values including the perception of naturalness and solitude would be impaired on a total of 6,000 acres by development of the diatomite claims and construction of a utility powerline. Over the remainder of the area there will not be any significant change from the existing situation, with only a three small range improvement reservoirs added,

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

The entire WSA would be open to recreational ORV use. Visitor use is not anticipated to increase noticeably beyond the current use of 4000 visitor days annually.

Conclusion:

There would be no impact on recreational ORV use.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

All 95,025 acres within the WSA would remain open for mineral entry. All potential mineral resources would be available for development. This includes the development of a 150 acre open pit mine for diatomite and a 20 acre sand and gravel site. Perlite deposits in the WSA are considered to have a low development potential and are not likely to be developed with or without wilderness designation due to the inaccessibility of the deposits, distance to a commercial market, and deposits with a higher potential exist in more accessible locations outside the WSA.

Conclusion:

There would be no impact to mineral resource development. Known deposits of diatomite and sand and gravel would remain available for development.

Impacts on Trans Sierra Utility Corridor

All three study corridors for the Trans Sierra utility corridor would be available for future construction of a high voltage transmission line.

Conclusion:

There would be no impacts on the proposed Trans Sierra utility corridor.

Consequences

BUFFALO HILLS
(CA-020-619)

PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS)

0 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
47,315 Acres Non-wilderness

Under the Proposed Action, none of the 47,315 acre Buffalo Hills WSA would be designated as wilderness.

The primary impacts of the Proposed Action relate to impacts to wilderness values.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The entire 47,315 acre WSA would not be designated as wilderness and none of the wilderness values would be protected by legislative action. The short-term impact of this action would be negligible since little development activity is anticipated in the short-term.

Naturalness

The continued use of the area by vehicles will maintain at the present condition of the 26 miles of ways, shown on the Chapter 3, Motorized Use Map 3-15, within the WSA. The ways are two wheel tracks that have not been constructed by equipment and have a relatively low impact on naturalness. The continued presence of 26 miles of ways would maintain approximately 31 acres in an unnatural condition. The perception of naturalness would be localized to the immediate vicinity of the ways as they do not have cuts, fills or graded roadways which can be seen from longer distances.

Livestock grazing and range management actions would not significantly change from the existing situation. Livestock grazing would be maintained at authorized levels of 2,111 AUMs in the WSA. Eight small livestock reservoirs are planned in the locations shown on the Chapter 3 Range Map 3-13. Each would disturb a surface area of about 2/3 acre, totalling 5 acres overall. Seven of the eight stock reservoirs are located in draws so the perception of naturalness would be affected in a localized area of about 10 acres each. One stock reservoir is located in a dry lake bed at the boundary between Section 16 and 21, T.34N., R.19E. Due to the flat terrain, it would be seen from an area of approximately 160 acres. The reservoirs are part of a grazing system which will improve the overall condition on the vegetation in the WSA.

The potential powerline corridor that just touches the WSA boundary along the southwest side of the WSA is mostly outside the WSA. There is adequate room in the corridor outside the WSA to build a future high voltage powerline and there would be no impact on naturalness in the WSA. This corridor is also not rated high priority, and the likelihood of construction is low.

Solitude

Opportunities for solitude would be constrained by the continued vehicular use on 26 miles of ways in the WSA. Total yearly visitation is expected to remain at existing levels of 3,500 use days annually for the foreseeable future. During much of the spring and summer a visitor would not be disturbed by more than a single vehicle and on many days, would not even see one. During the fall hunting season, and particularly on weekends, there would be several vehicles per day on each of the ways.

Solitude would be affected very slightly by range and wild horse management activities. Wild horse roundup with the use of a low flying helicopter would be done for a couple of days every three or four years. During every spring and fall visitors might encounter vehicles moving or supplying sheepherder camps or aerial flights for predator control. The trips to supply the camps amount to approximately one trip per week and the predator control flights are only for 2 to 3 days in the spring and fall. Livestock facility maintenance activities would continue with approximately 4 vehicle trips annually, plus an additional 10 to 15 trips at 5 year intervals for spring and reservoir maintenance. All the springs and reservoirs in the WSA would not be maintained every 5 years, but some of them would be visited at that interval. Solitude would be reduced for 5 to 7 days during construction of the 8 livestock reservoirs, and there would be an additional 5 to 10 trips at 5 year intervals for maintenance.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would essentially remain the same as presently exists. The activities of hiking, horseback riding and nature study would not be impacted by the minor development activities proposed.

Special Features

There would not be any impact on either of the areas listed as being special features. None of the planned developments (8 reservoirs) occur in the Buffalo Creek Canyons or on the geologic feature known as Hole in the Ground. Existing levels of motorized use would remain at 3500 visitor days and the rough, steep topography of the special features limits vehicular use to existing ways.

Conclusion:

Wilderness values of naturalness, solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would remain essentially as they presently exist. The eight proposed small livestock reservoirs would have only a slight impact. Special features would not be impacted.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

The entire WSA would be open to recreational ORV use. Over the long-term, use would not significantly change from the current estimated 3,500 annual use days.

Consequences

Conclusion:

Recreational ORV use would be expected to remain near current use levels. There would be no impact on recreational ORV use.

Adverse Impacts Which Cannot be Avoided

The only identified adverse impacts relate to the loss of naturalness on 2/3 acre at each of the 8 proposed reservoir sites.

Relationship Between Local Short-Term Uses of Man's Environment and the Maintenance and Enhancement of Long-Term Productivity

If the WSA is not designated wilderness, all present short-term uses would continue. For the Buffalo Hills WSA there are several ongoing uses including livestock grazing, hunting, wildlife management (deer, antelope, upland game) and wild horse management. These uses do not impact longterm productivity. As the Proposed Action is for non-wilderness, the possibility of activities that could reduce long-term productivity such as mining, is greater than under wilderness designation. This possibility in the Buffalo Hills WSA is very slight as no known or suspected mineral deposits in large or commercially extractable quantities exists.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources

No irreversible or irretrievable commitments of resources are anticipated.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

47,315 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
0 Acres Non-wilderness

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the entire 47,315 acres of public land in the Buffalo Hills WSA would be designated as wilderness.

The primary impacts under this alternative are related to vehicle closure and impacts on wilderness values.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The All Wilderness Alternative would result in all 47,315 acres of the WSA being protected by legislative mandate. Wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and the supplemental values of topography, vegetation, visual quality, wildlife and cultural resources would also be protected by wilderness management.

Naturalness

Wilderness designation would close the entire 47,315 acres to all forms of recreational ORV use which should have a slight improvement in naturalness over the long-term as the 26 miles of existing ways become less noticeable. Some of the ways would continue to be used several times a year for the operation and maintenance of livestock grazing. Livestock grazing actions

would have the same impacts as discussed in the Proposed Action. Construction of eight scattered small livestock reservoirs would have the same impacts as discussed under the Proposed Action.

Solitude

Solitude would be slightly improved by the removal of 3,500 use days of recreational vehicular use. During most of the year, this would mean not seeing one or two vehicles per day. During hunting seasons a visitor would have seen 4 or 5 vehicles per day on the existing ways, particularly on weekends. The boundaries of the all wilderness alternative include areas on the periphery where flat topography and low growing vegetation would make enforcement of ORV closures very difficult. Any barriers on existing ways or off of cherrystem or boundary roads could be easily bypassed. During hunting season several vehicles a day could penetrate the boundary. This illegal activity would slightly degrade solitude around the perimeter of the WSA.

The impacts on solitude from grazing operation and maintenance, wild horse and burro gathering and predator control are the same as discussed in the Proposed Action.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

The opportunity for primitive and unconfined recreation would essentially remain the same as presently exists. The activities that are mainly available are hiking, horseback riding and nature study. The quality of these experiences would be slightly improved by the removal of 3,500 use days of motorized recreation.

Special Features

There would not be any impacts occurring in the Buffalo Creek Canyon area or the Hole in the Ground area. There are no management activities proposed in either area.

Conclusion:

All wilderness values would receive long-term Congressional protection. Wilderness values would only be slightly enhanced over present levels due to continued vehicle travel for range management activities and illegal ORV use.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Wilderness designation would close the entire 47,315 acres of the WSA to recreational ORV use. Twenty-six miles of vehicle way would be closed. Recreational ORV use of approximately 3,500 visitor days annually would be eliminated annually from the WSA. Public land that offers similar opportunities for recreational ORV use is located throughout the region. Therefore, recreational ORV use foregone in the WSA would be absorbed on the surrounding public lands.

Conclusion:

Recreational ORV use of 3,500 visitor days would be foregone annually. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

23,230 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
24,085 Acres Non-wilderness

The Partial Wilderness Alternative would designate 23,230 acres as wilderness and 24,085 acres as non-wilderness.

The primary impacts of this alternative relate to the protection of wilderness values.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

In this alternative 23,230 acres of the Buffalo Hills WSA would be designated as wilderness and 24,085 acres would not be designated. The wilderness values on 23,230 acres would be protected by legislative mandate. The naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be protected by special wilderness management.

Naturalness

On the designated wilderness portion of this alternative, 23,230 acres would be closed to recreational ORV use. Naturalness would only be slightly enhanced as there is only 5 of the 26 miles of existing ways in the wilderness portion. These 5 miles of ways would slowly become less noticeable. Some of the ways would continue to be used several times a year for the operation and maintenance of livestock grazing. In the nondesignated portion (24,085 acres) the impacts of vehicular use would remain as it is presently in the existing situation. Twenty-one miles of existing ways are in the non-suitable portion. They would continue to be used at the present levels of use (3,000 user days) for the foreseeable future, and would remain in essentially their present condition. The impacts of these ways are localized as they do not have cuts, fills or graded surfaces, so they are only noticeable when you are in their immediate vicinity.

The impacts from livestock grazing and range management actions would be the same as stated in the Proposed Action. Five of the eight proposed stock reservoirs are in the wilderness portion with the remaining three in the non-wilderness portion.

The proposed powerline corridor along the edge of the WSA would not have any impacts, as any construction of future powerlines would occur outside the WSA.

Solitude

In the 23,230 acres designated wilderness, there would be a slight improvement in solitude due to a reduction of 500 user days of motorized recreation due to closing 5 miles of ways. The remainder of the area designated wilderness has no vehicle ways due to the ruggedness of the terrain and little or no vehicle use has occurred or would occur after designation. The non-wilderness area (24,085 acres) would be open to vehicle use. Opportunity for solitude would not change from the existing situation. Total yearly visitation is expected to remain near existing levels of 3,000 user days on the 21 miles of ways found in the nonwilderness area. During the spring and summer a visitor would not be disturbed by more than a single vehicle, and on many days, would not even see one. During the fall hunting seasons, and particularly on weekends, there would be several vehicles per day on each of the ways.

The impacts on solitude from grazing operation and maintenance, wild horse and burro gathering and predator control are the same as discussed in the Proposed Action. Solitude would be disturbed for 5 to 7 days by construction of the eight small livestock reservoirs. Three are in the wilderness portion and five in the non-wilderness portion. There would be 3 additional maintenance trips every 5 years in the wilderness portion and 5 additional maintenance trips every 5 years in the non-wilderness portion.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would not be significantly changed in this alternative. The quality of hiking, horseback riding or nature study would be slightly improved in the designated wilderness area due to the closing of 5 miles of ways to motorized use. In the non-wilderness area, the existing situation would be maintained and there still would be plenty of area available for the above described activities.

Special Features

There are no management activities proposed in Buffalo Creek Canyon or Hole in the Ground so there would not be any impact to them. Both special features are partially in the suitable area as shown in the Chapter 2 Partial Alternative Map.

Conclusion:

Wilderness values on 23,230 acres would be protected by wilderness designation, but would only slightly be enhanced by designation. On 24,085 acres of non-wilderness, wilderness values of naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be slightly reduced through continued recreational ORV use.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Most of those portions accessible to recreational ORV use would remain open for use. Twenty-one of the existing twenty-six miles of vehicle ways

would remain open for vehicular use. The long-term levels of recreational ORV use is expected to drop 500 visitor days to approximately 3,000 visitor days annually. It is then expected to stay at or near that level. Public land that offers similar opportunities for recreational ORV use is located throughout the region. Therefore, recreational ORV use foregone in the WSA would be absorbed on the surrounding public lands.

Conclusion:

Recreational ORV use of 500 visitor days would be foregone annually out of 3,500 visitor days present use. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

TWIN PEAKS
(CA-020-619A)

PROPOSED ACTION (PARTIAL WILDERNESS)

54,970 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
36,435 Acres Non-wilderness

The Proposed Action for the Twin Peaks WSA would designate 54,970 acres as wilderness and 36,435 acres non-wilderness.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to the protection of wilderness values and the loss of wilderness values on portions of the WSA impacted by recreational ORV use and utility corridors.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Under this alternative 54,970 acres of the Twin Peaks WSA would be designated as wilderness and 36,435 acres would not be designated. The wilderness values on the 54,970 acres of wilderness would receive special legislative protection provided by designation. The area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be protected by wilderness management.

Naturalness

The designation of 54,970 acres of the WSA as wilderness would result in a complete restriction of recreational ORV use and the closure of eight miles of existing ways. This would slightly improve naturalness as the ways would slowly revert to a more natural condition. On the vast majority of the designated wilderness area, naturalness would be unchanged due to the lack of existing vehicle access. Much of the area is rough and rugged with steep topography that does not allow vehicles to pass over it. Some of the 8 miles of ways would be used several times a year for operation and maintenance of the grazing activity. The impacts of vehicle use on the non-wilderness 36,435 acres would remain essentially as it presently exists. Thirty miles of ways would continue to be used at near their present levels of use (6,200 user days). The impact of these existing

ways on naturalness is localized to the immediate vicinity of the ways as they do not have cuts, fills or graded surfaces which would make them more visible. Use levels are not expected to change very much in the foreseeable future.

Livestock grazing and range management actions would not have a significant impact on naturalness. The area would continue to provide a total of 4,060 AUMs for cattle and sheep with 2,400 of the AUMs attributed to the designated wilderness portion. The only change in the existing situation is the proposed construction of four small livestock reservoirs. Their locations are shown on the Chapter 3 Range Map 3-17. One is located in the designated wilderness portion and three in the non-wilderness portion. They would disturb about 2/3 acre each and as they are located in small draws, the perception of naturalness would be localized to an area of about 10 acres for each one.

Two potential utility corridors are shown to pass through portions of the WSA, as shown in Chapter 3 Minerals/Utility Map 3-16. The only proposed route that might be built on in this alternative is the southern route which was in the non-wilderness portion of the WSA. Seven miles of high voltage powerline would be built with the service road being the boundary access road that already services the underground telephone cable. The amount of actual surface disturbance would be small, limited to clearing a pad for each of the towers. This would be an area of less than an acre for each tower. The perception of naturalness would be affected in an area of 8,500 acres as the powerline could be visible for up to a mile away.

Solitude

Solitude would be slightly improved in the designated wilderness portion by the closing of eight miles of existing ways and the reduction of 1,000 user days of recreational vehicular use. On the non-wilderness portion, there would not be any significant change in solitude from the existing situation as motorized recreation use would continue at existing levels (6,200 user days), or slightly higher for the foreseeable future. The 1,000 user days from the wilderness portion would be spread over a larger area than just the non-wilderness portion of this WSA.

Solitude would be slightly impaired by the continued operation of grazing management and the maintenance of existing and proposed range management facilities. During every spring and fall visitors might encounter vehicles moving or supplying sheepherder camps. The trips to supply or move camps amount to about one trip per week. Livestock facility maintenance activities would continue with approximately 4 vehicle trips annually, plus an additional 10 to 15 trips at 5 year intervals for spring and reservoir maintenance. In the wilderness portion of this alternative there is one planned reservoir, one existing reservoir, 18 developed springs and 8 miles of fence. In the non-wilderness portion there are 3 planned reservoirs, 4 existing reservoirs, 6 developed springs, 1 well with windmill and 9 miles of fence. The 1 new reservoir in the wilderness portion would

require 1 additional maintenance trip every 5 years. The 3 new reservoirs in the non-wilderness portion would need 3 more maintenance trips every 5 years.

Aircraft would continue to have a slight impact on solitude when used to gather wild horses and burros or to conduct predator control flights. Wild horse roundups occur at 3 to 4 year intervals with a helicopter flying low over the area for a couple of days. Predator control flights are made in the spring and fall to remove the offending animals from the areas where sheep lambing is taking place. They occur for a 2 to 3 day period each spring and fall.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would essentially remain as they presently exist. The activities of hiking, horseback riding and nature study would not be impacted over most of the WSA by the minor development activities proposed. Construction of a high voltage powerline in the proposed corridor along the southern edge of the nonwilderness portion would diminish the quality and attractiveness of these activities in the area of the proposed powerline (8,500 acres).

Special Features

The archaeology values found in the canyon above Smoke Creek Reservoir would not be impacted by any of the management action developments proposed. No development or excavation of the sites themselves are proposed.

Conclusion:

The 54,970 acres of the Twin Peaks WSA designated as wilderness would receive long term Congressional protection. The area's naturalness, opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would slightly improve because of the elimination of 1,000 visitor days of recreational ORV use annually. On the 36,435 acres not designated wilderness, naturalness would be lost on approximately 8,500 acres of utility corridor when a powerline is built. On the remainder of the non-designated area, there would be slight reductions of naturalness and opportunities for solitude due to recreational ORV use, sheep management activities, wild horse and burro management and adding three small stock ponds for range management.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Wilderness designation would close 54,970 acres to recreational ORV use. This is primarily ORV use associated with hunting. Recreational vehicle use of approximately 1,000 visitor days annually would be eliminated from the designated portion. Public lands nearby offer similar or better opportunities for recreational ORV use. Therefore, recreational use foregone would be absorbed on surrounding public lands.

Conclusion:

Recreational hunting ORV use would be foregone on 54,970 acres designated wilderness with 1,000 visitor use days foregone annually. The impacts of shifting of the use to other public lands would be negligible.

On the 36,435 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would remain at about 6200 visitor days per year.

Impacts on Trans Sierra Utility Corridor

The high priority utility corridor is located in the non-wilderness portion and could be built on at some future date. The lower priority utility corridor in the northeast portion of the WSA could not be built on as that is the suitable wilderness portion.

Conclusion:

The impact on the utility corridors is slight as the options available for construction of future powerlines has been reduced, but the higher priority alignment is outside the wilderness boundary and could be built on.

Adverse Impacts Which Cannot be Avoided

The wilderness value of naturalness would be unavoidably lost on the area that the powerline would be constructed and on the 2/3 acre at each of the four proposed stock reservoirs. Solitude would be temporarily disturbed by the use of vehicles for recreation in the non-wilderness portion, grazing maintenance and airplanes for wild horse gathering and predator control.

Relationship Between Local Short-Term Uses of Man's Environment and the Maintenance and Enhancement of Productivity

None of the existing or proposed short-term uses of the WSA will have a significant impact on its overall productivity. Some of the activities, such as range improvement facilities and wild horse management will improve range condition. The construction of a powerline will remove the quality of the wilderness values for as long as it is in use and many years after that.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

The construction of a powerline would create an irreversible commitment of the wilderness resources in the powerline corridor. In the remaining area there are no activities anticipated in the foreseeable future that would have more than a very slight impact on wilderness values.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

91,405 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
0 Acres Non-wilderness

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the entire 91,405 acres of public land in the Twin Peaks WSA would be designated as wilderness.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to elimination of recreational ORV use, elimination of utility corridors and the protection of wilderness values.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Under the All Wilderness Alternative all 91,405 acres of the WSA would be protected by statute. Wilderness values of size, naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be protected.

Wilderness values would be enhanced by designation of the adjacent Five Springs WSA that shares a 5 mile common boundary along the Shinn Ranch - Smoke Creek Ranch Road. In this area, in effect, a larger wilderness would be created separated only by the boundary road. A two mile common boundary with Buffalo Hills WSA in the north side of Twin Peaks WSA would not significantly enhance wilderness values as this portion of the Buffalo Hills WSA is at the end of a 1 mile wide peninsula of public land adjacent to Twin Peaks WSA.

Naturalness

Wilderness designation would close the entire 91,405 acres to all forms of recreational ORV use which should have a slight improvement in naturalness over a long time as the 38 miles of ways become less noticeable. Some of the ways would continue to be used several times a year for operation and maintenance of the grazing activity.

Construction of a four, 2/3 acre stock reservoirs as planned would have the same impacts as discussed in the Proposed Action.

Solitude

Solitude would be improved by the removal of 7,200 visitor days of recreational vehicular use. The boundaries of the all wilderness alternative include areas on the periphery where the topography and vegetation make enforcement of ORV closures very difficult. Any barriers on existing ways or off of boundary roads could easily be bypassed. During hunting season several vehicles a day could penetrate the boundary. This illegal activity would slightly degrade solitude on about 15,000 acres, all around the perimeter of the area.

The impacts on solitude from grazing operation and maintenance, wild horse and burro gathering, and predator control are the same as discussed in the Proposed Action.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

The opportunity for primitive and unconfined recreation would essentially remain the same as presently exists. The activities that are mainly available are hiking, horseback riding and nature study. They would be slightly improved by the removal of 7,200 visitor days of motorized recreation.

Special Features

The impacts on the archaeology sites would be the same as for the Proposed Action as no management actions are proposed in the area they are found. No excavations or other site management activities are proposed.

Conclusion:

All wilderness values would receive long-term Congressional protection. Wilderness values would be slightly enhanced on 60% of the Twin Peaks WSA. Illegal recreational ORV use on the bench areas would slightly degrade solitude on 40% of the WSA.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Wilderness designation would close the entire 91,405 acres of the WSA to recreational ORV use. 38 miles of vehicle way would be closed. Recreational ORV use of approximately 7,200 visitor days would be eliminated annually from the WSA. Public land that offers similar opportunities for recreational ORV use is located throughout the region. Therefore, recreational ORV use foregone in the WSA would be absorbed on the surrounding public lands.

Conclusion:

Recreational ORV use of 7,200 visitor days would be foregone annually. The impacts of shifting the use to other public lands would be negligible.

Impacts on Trans Sierra Utility Corridor

Wilderness designation of the entire WSA would mean that neither of the two utility corridors could have powerlines built on them. Of the two corridors, the one across the southern edge of the WSA was of higher priority to the utility companies. As the utility companies have indicated that these corridors were their preferred locations for future powerlines, it follows that another location would increase costs of construction. The future line would either be longer to reach its destination or over more rugged terrain. As the alternate routes have not been determined, we cannot quantify exactly what the increases would be.

Conclusion:

There would be no utility corridor in the WSA. Any future powerlines would have to use an alternate route location which would entail higher costs of construction. As the alternate routes have not been determined, we cannot quantify how much more expensive they would be.

Consequences

NO WILDERNESS/NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

0 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
91,405 Acres Non-wilderness

Under this alternative, none of the 91,405 acre Twin Peaks WSA would be designated as wilderness. The area would be managed under the guidance of the BLM's Cal Neva planning unit's existing land use plan that emphasizes livestock, wildlife, wild horses and dispersed motorized recreation.

The primary impacts of this alternative relate to the loss of wilderness values.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The entire 91,405 acre WSA would not be designated wilderness, therefore, none of the wilderness values would receive special statutory protection provided by designation. Other than the high priority utility corridor (8,500 acres), short-term impact of this on the remainder of the WSA would not be significant since little development activity is anticipated whether or not the area is designated as wilderness.

Naturalness

The continued use of the area by vehicles will maintain at the present condition of the 38 miles of ways, shown on the Chapter 3, Motorized Use Map 3-18, within the WSA. The ways are two wheel tracks that have not been constructed by equipment and have a relatively low impact on naturalness. The continued presence of 38 miles of ways would maintain approximately 46 acres in an unnatural condition. The perception of naturalness would be localized to the immediate vicinity of the ways as they do not have cuts, fills or graded roadways which can be seen from longer distances.

Livestock grazing and range management actions would not significantly change from the existing situation. Livestock grazing would be maintained at authorized levels of 4,060 AUMs in the WSA. Four small livestock reservoirs are planned in the locations shown on the Chapter 3 Range Map 3-17. Each would disturb a surface area of about 2/3 acre, totalling 3 acres overall. All of the stock reservoirs are located in draws so the perception of naturalness would be affected in a localized area of about 10 acres each. The reservoirs are part of a grazing system which will improve the overall condition on the vegetation in the WSA.

There are two proposed utility corridors across the WSA. The route across the southern edge of the WSA has been identified as high priority by the utility companies and would be used if the area is non-wilderness. The impacts on naturalness from this route are the same as stated in the Proposed Action. The proposed corridor that traverses the northern side of the WSA was identified as low priority and it is not likely to be built on in the foreseeable future.

Solitude

Opportunities for solitude would be constrained by the continued vehicular use on 38 miles of ways in the WSA. Total yearly visitation is expected to remain at existing levels of 7,200 use days annually for the foreseeable future. During much of the spring and summer a visitor would not be disturbed by more than a single vehicle and on many days, would not even see one. During the fall hunting season, and particularly on weekends, there would be several vehicles per day on each of the ways.

The impacts on solitude from grazing operation and maintenance, wild horse and burro gathering, and predator control are the same as discussed in the Proposed Action.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would essentially remain the same as presently exists. The activities of hiking, horseback riding and nature study would not be impacted over most of the WSA by the minor development activities proposed. Continued use of 38 miles of ways would diminish the quality of the experience when meeting a vehicle. Construction of a high voltage powerline in the proposed southern corridor would diminish the attractiveness of hiking, etc., in the area of the powerline.

Special Features

The archaeology values in the Smoke Creek Canyon about Smoke Creek Reservoir would not be impacted by any of the planned management actions. No surface disturbing activities are proposed in the area of the archaeology sites. No development or excavations of the sites themselves are proposed. The sites are in a canyon that cannot be accessed by vehicle. They are located within a mile of a parallel boundary road.

Conclusion:

Over the next 15 to 20 years the perception value of naturalness would be impaired on approximately 8,500 acres of the 91,405 acre WSA. This would occur through development of a high voltage powerline. On the remainder of the WSA, the wilderness values including opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be slightly degraded primarily due to continuing recreational ORV use.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

The entire WSA would remain open to recreational ORV use. Over the long term, ORV use would stay at approximately 7,200 visitor days annually.

Conclusion:

Recreational ORV use is expected to stay at around 7,200 visitor use days. Therefore, there would be no impact to recreational ORV use.

Impacts on Trans Sierra Utility Corridor

As none of the area would be wilderness, both of the utility corridor routes that pass through the WSA could have powerlines built on them. There would be no impact on the utility corridors.

Conclusion:

Both utility corridor routes in the WSA could have powerlines built on them. Therefore, there is no impact on the Trans Sierra utility corridors.

WALL CANYON
(CA-020-805)

PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS/NO ACTION)

0 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
45,790 Acres Non-wilderness

Under the Proposed Action, none of the 45,790 acre Wall Canyon WSA would be designated as wilderness.

The primary impacts of this alternative relate to the exploration for mineral resources and the resulting impacts on wilderness values.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The entire 45,790 acre WSA would not be designated as wilderness and none of the wilderness values of naturalness, solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would receive the special statutory protection provided by designation. The primary impacts of this alternative relate to naturalness and solitude related to recreational ORV use and minerals exploration.

Naturalness

The continued recreational ORV use of 700 visitor days, plus an increase of 100 visitor days on 16 miles of vehicle ways in the northern and western portions of the WSA would lead to a slight decrease in the perception of naturalness. The ways reduce the perception of naturalness on 200 to 300 acres and reduce naturalness on 20 acres. Broken topography would tend to localize the impacts to individual canyons and draws.

Surface disturbance associated with the construction of two small reservoirs would impair the natural character on less than 2 acres and reduce the perception of naturalness on approximately 20 acres in the center of

the WSA. Maintenance on 12 reservoirs on a 15-year interval would maintain unnatural conditions on approximately 1 acre per site on projects widely scattered through the WSA. The perception of naturalness would continue to be reduced on approximately 40 acres per site. Maintenance of spring developments and fences would have almost no impact to naturalness due to the unobtrusive nature of the projects. Impacts would not be significant due to the scattered nature of the activities.

Surface disturbance associated with mineral exploration on the northwestern portion of the WSA would impair naturalness on approximately 10 acres and the perception of naturalness on approximately 800 acres. In the very unlikely event that mineral development occurs, naturalness would be lost on 300 acres and the perception of naturalness would be reduced on 2,500 acres. Development of a 300 acre open pit mine would significantly reduce naturalness on a small portion of the WSA. Naturalness on the west majority of the WSA would be unaffected by minerals development.

Solitude

Recreational ORV use is primarily associated with hunting use in the late summer/early fall and would continue to occur on the 16 miles of ways. An estimated 80 percent of the use occurs on the northern and northwestern portion of the WSA. Solitude would be disrupted beyond existing levels by the increased recreational ORV use of 100 visitor days annually. However, since most of the use occurs during the hunting seasons, solitude would remain easy to find during the remainder of the year.

Construction of two reservoirs would result in 6 vehicle trips over a one week period in the central portion of the WSA. Solitude would be disrupted during this period in the vicinity of the projects and along the access routes. However, due to the short time frame this would be a negligible impact.

Livestock facility maintenance for the 2 proposed reservoirs would result in 2 additional vehicle trips every 5 years for major maintenance. These activities would have negligible impacts on solitude.

Mining exploration activities would disturb solitude in the northwestern portion of the WSA. During a two week period when exploration holes are being drilled outstanding opportunities for solitude would be foregone or approximately 800 acres. In the very unlikely event that a mine is developed, solitude would be foregone on the same 800 acres for the estimated 5 year life of the mine.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

The only activity within the WSA which would reduce opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation including hiking, horseback riding and wildlife observation would be the minerals exploration (and improbable development) in the northwestern portion of the WSA. These activities would affect recreational opportunities on approximately 800 acres.

Special Features

The WSAs diversity of wildlife and vegetation and high value cultural resource sites are primarily affected by grazing management practices. The resources would continue to be monitored and grazing management practices modified in the 3 allotments if the resources did not respond as projected. Therefore non-designation would not measurably impact the identified special features.

Conclusions:

The Wall Canyon WSA's wilderness values of naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be impacted over the next fifteen to twenty years due to mineral exploration and a small increase in recreational ORV use. The perception of naturalness would be impaired over approximately 800 acres. Should development of an open pit mine occur, up to 800 acres would be disturbed, impairing the perception of naturalness on up to 2,500 acres of the WSA. The WSAs special features would not be impacted.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

The entire WSA and including 16 miles of vehicle ways would be open to ORV use. Over the long term ORV use would rise from 700 to 800 visitor use days in response to higher hunting quotas.

Conclusions:

Recreational ORV use of the WSA is expected to increase by 100 visitor use days over the long term. There would be no impacts on recreational ORV use.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

All lands within the WSA would remain open for mineral entry and mineral leasing. All potential resources would be available for development. Mining claims and exploration would be expected only on the northwestern portion of the WSA and development of a mine is not anticipated in the next fifteen to twenty years based on the potential for precious metals and the lack of any significant potential for mineral development. In the unlikely event development would occur, a 300 acre open pit mining operation would be located in the northwestern corner of the WSA.

Development of oil and gas or geothermal resources is unlikely because all leases have been dropped, there has been no exploration and the WSA does not contain favorable geology for oil and gas or geothermal development.

Because all potential minerals would remain available for development, there would be no impact to development of potential resources.

Conclusions:

Potential mineral resources would be available for development. There would be no impact on development of mineral resources in the Wall Canyon WSA.

Adverse Impacts Which Cannot Be Avoided

The only unavoidable impacts would be those associated with mineral developed should mining activity occur. In the event a mineral discovery is made, preplanning and immediate reclamation of disturbed areas will greatly reduce the potential for adverse impact. It is anticipated that any adverse impacts would be minor since surface disturbing activities are projected to occur on only 300 acres and would not effect any sensitive species or habitats.

Relationship Between Local Short-term Uses of Man's Environment and the Maintenance and Enhancement of Long-term Productivity

If the WSA is not designated wilderness, all present, short-term uses would continue. For the WSA there are many ongoing uses including hunting, hiking, livestock grazing, wildlife management (deer, antelope, sage grouse), and potentially, a very low level of mining exploration and development. Under the Proposed Action, future development options will remain open and long-term productivity is not likely to be impacted. However, without wilderness designation, the possibility of activities (for example, increased mineral development) that could reduce long-term productivity is greater than under wilderness designation.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

Potential development of mineral resources could create an irreversible commitment of the wilderness resource in part or all of the WSA, if it is not designated as wilderness. However, large-scale development is not anticipated now or in the foreseeable future. In the event mineral development does occur, an estimated 300 acres of the WSA would be disturbed. On the whole, however, no irreversible or irretrievable commitments of resources are anticipated.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

45,790 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
0 Acres Non-wilderness

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the entire 45,790 acres of public land in the Wall Canyon WSA would be designated as wilderness.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to the impacts on mineral development and recreational ORV use and the protection of wilderness values.

Consequences

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, all 45,790 acres of the WSA would be protected by statute. Wilderness values of size, naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation and the supplemental features of topography, vegetation, visual quality and cultural resources would be protected by special wilderness management.

Naturalness

The closure of the entire WSA to recreational ORV use would slightly enhance the perception of naturalness on approximately 2,000 acres of the northern and western portions of the WSA. Improvement in the perception of naturalness would be most apparent during the August to November hunting seasons when most of the ORV use occurs. The 16 miles of vehicle way would only slightly return the natural character due to the continued low frequency use associated with livestock facility maintenance.

Impacts associated with construction and maintenance of livestock facilities would affect naturalness in the same manner as described under the Proposed Action.

Total surface disturbance within the WSA would be approximately 5 acres. The activities which result in surface disturbance would continue to reduce the perception of naturalness on approximately 500 acres.

Solitude

Elimination of 700 visitor days of recreational ORV use would result in an improvement in opportunities for solitude. This improvement would be most apparent in the late summer/early fall period on the northern and western portions of the WSA. Except for opening weekend for sage grouse and deer seasons the improvement in opportunities for solitude would not be significant.

The affects of livestock facility construction and maintenance on solitude would be the same as those described under the Proposed Action resulting in only negligible impacts on solitude.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Construction of two reservoirs and maintenance of other projects would be the only activity with any affect opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation including hiking, horseback riding, and wildlife observation. Since these activities would only negligibly change over existing levels there would be no measurable impact to opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

Special Features

The WSAs diversity of wildlife and vegetation and high value cultural resource sites are primarily affected by grazing management practices. The resources would continue to be monitored and grazing management practices modified in the 3 allotments if the resources did not respond as projected. Therefore designation of the entire WSA as wilderness would not measurably impact the identified special features.

Conclusions:

All wilderness values would receive long term Congressional protection. Wilderness values of solitude and naturalness would be slightly enhanced on the 45,790 acres within the WSA. The values of primitive and unconfined recreation and the special features would not be impacted.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Wilderness designation would close the entire 45,790 acre Wall Canyon WSA to all forms of recreational ORV use. Recreational ORV use of 700 visitor use days would be eliminated annually from the WSA. This use is almost entirely associated with hunting for mule deer, antelope, sagegrouse and chukar. It is estimated that half of the annual visitor use would change from hunting using vehicles to hunting on foot or with horses. Public land that offers similar to superior opportunities for hunting is limited in the region and thus the recreational ORV use foregone on the WSA could not be absorbed on surrounding public lands without loss of hunting opportunities and potential harvest to the users.

Conclusions:

Recreational ORV use associated with hunting of 700 visitor use days annually would be foregone. this loss would only be partially offset by increases in non-motorized visitor use. This represents a small, but significant loss to recreational users.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

All lands within the Wall Canyon WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry and mineral leasing. Development of potential mineral resources would be foregone. This includes almost no potential for oil and gas or geothermal resources and low potential for precious minerals (silver and gold). It is assumed that no production sufficient to support commercial development would be foregone. Therefore, the impacts on mineral resource development would be negligible.

Conclusions:

Development of potential mineral resources would be foregone. Because there are no known commercial deposits of minerals there would be no significant impacts to mineral resource development.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

26,520 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
19,270 Acres Non-wilderness

Under the Partial Wilderness Alternative, 26,520 acres of the Wall Canyon WSA would be designated as wilderness and 19,270 acres would not be designated.

Consequences

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to the protection of wilderness values through wilderness designation.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

In this alternative 26,520 acres of the Wall Canyon WSA would be designated as wilderness and 19,270 acres would not be designated. The wilderness values on the 26,520 acres designated as wilderness would receive the special legislative protection provided by designation. The areas naturalness, solitude and opportunities for primitive recreation would be protected by wilderness management.

Naturalness

There would be a slight positive benefit to naturalness as a result the closure of 26,520 acres including 8 miles of vehicle ways which would eliminate 100 visitor use days of recreational ORV use annually.

On the designated portion of the WSA, construction of two small reservoirs would impair the natural character on less than 2 acres and reduce the perception of naturalness on approximately 20 acres in the center of the WSA Maintenance of the 2 reservoirs on a 15-year interval would maintain unnatural condition on approximately 1 acre per site on projects widely scattered through the WSA. The perception of naturalness would continued to be slightly reduced on approximately 40 acres per site. Impacts would not be significant due to the scattered nature of the activities.

On the 19,270 acres of the WSA not designated as wilderness, continued use of 8 miles of vehicle ways by recreational ORVs would maintain approximately 10 acres in an non-natural condition and reduce the perception of naturalness on approximately 100 acres.

Surface disturbance associated with mineral exploration on the northwestern portion of the WSA would impair naturalness on approximately 10 acres and the perception of naturalness on approximately 800 acres. In the very unlikely event that mineral development occurs, naturalness would be lost on 300 acres and the perception of naturalness would be reduced on 2,500 acres. Development of a 300 acre open pit mine would significantly reduce naturalness on a small portion of the WSA. Naturalness on the west majority of the WSA would be unaffected by minerals development.

Total surface disturbance within the WSA would be approximately 2 acres (to 350 acres if minerals were developed). The new surface disturbing activities would reduce the perception of naturalness on approximately 40 acres (850 acres if extensive mineral development occur).

Solitude

Opportunities for solitude would improve on 26,520 acres in the designated portion of the WSA primarily as the result of the elimination of an

estimated 100 visitor use days of recreational ORV use. Virtually all of this use is made during the August to November hunting seasons. During that period solitude would be slightly improved, but during the remainder of the year there would be negligible changes to opportunities for solitude.

Reservoir construction in the designated portion of the WSA near the northern boundary would result in 6 vehicle trips over a one week period. Solitude would be disrupted during this period in the vicinity of the projects and along access routes. Due to the short time frame this would be a negligible impact.

Livestock facility maintenance activities would result in an additional 2 vehicle trips every 5 years in the designated portion for major reservoir maintenance. These activities would have negligible impacts on solitude.

On the 19,270 acres of the WSA not designated as wilderness recreational ORV use of 500 visitor days, plus an additional 200 visitor days annually would continue to reduce opportunities for solitude primarily during the hunting seasons. Solitude levels would not significantly change from existing levels.

Mining exploration activities would disturb solitude in the northwestern portion of the WSA. During a two week period when exploration holes are being drilled outstanding opportunities for solitude would be foregone or approximately 800 acres in the non-designated portion. In the very unlikely event that a mine is developed, solitude would be foregone on the same 800 acres for the estimated 5 year life of the mine.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

The only activity within the WSA which would reduce opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation including hiking, horseback riding and wildlife observation would be the minerals exploration (and improbable development) in the northwestern portion of the WSA. These activities would affect recreational opportunities on approximately 800 acres. This would occur in the non-designated portion of the WSA.

Special Features

The WSAs diversity of wildlife and vegetation and high value cultural resource sites are primarily affected by grazing management practices. The resources would continue to be monitored and grazing management practices modified in the 3 allotments if the resources did not respond as projected. Therefore designation or non-designation would not measurably impact the identified special features.

Conclusions:

The 26,520 acres designated as wilderness would receive long term statutory protection. The existing wilderness values would be maintained while naturalness and solitude would improve negligibly due to a decrease of 100 recreational ORV visitor use days annually. On the 19,270 acres not designated as wilderness, there would be slight

reductions of naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation due to small scale minerals exploration and recreational ORV use increases of 200 visitor days per year.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Wilderness designation would close 26,250 acres to recreational ORV use. Recreational vehicle use of approximately 100 visitor days annually would be eliminated from the WSA. Public lands nearby (both inside and outside the WSA) offer similar or better opportunities for recreational ORV use. Therefore, recreational use foregone would be absorbed on surrounding public lands.

The 19,270 acres not designated wilderness would have an increase of approximately 200 visitor use days annually (to 700 visitor days) as hunting quotas increase.

Conclusions:

Recreational ORV use would be foregone on 26,520 acres designated wilderness with 100 visitor use days foregone annually. The shifting of the use to other public lands would be negligible.

On the 19,270 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would increase as hunting quotas increase. There would be no impacts.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

All of the 26,520 acres designated as wilderness would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry and mineral leasing. Development of potential mineral resources would be foregone. This includes almost no potential for oil and gas or geothermal and very low potential for metallic minerals. It is assumed that no production sufficient to support commercial development would be foregone. Therefore, the impacts on mineral resource development would be negligible.

All of the 19,270 acres not designated as wilderness would remain open for mineral entry and leasing. All potential mineral resources would be open for development. Minerals exploration is expected only on the northwestern portion of the WSA and development of a mine is not anticipated in the next 15 to 20 years. No oil and gas or geothermal leasing or exploration anticipated.

Conclusions:

Development of potential mineral resources would be foregone on 26,520 acres. However, no identified resources exist on these lands. Potential mineral resources of 19,270 acres would be available for mineral development. There would be no impacts to mineral resource development.

PROPOSED ACTION (PARTIAL WILDERNESS)

17,320 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
34,823 Acres Non-wilderness

The Proposed Action for the Little High Rock Canyon WSA would designate 17,320 acres as wilderness and 34,823 acres non-wilderness.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to the protection of wilderness values and the loss of wilderness values on portions of the WSA impacted by range management projects and mineral development.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Under this alternative 17,320 acres of the Little High Rock WSA would be designated as wilderness. The wilderness values on the 17,320 acres of wilderness would receive special legislative protection provided by designation. The area's naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, as well as outstanding scenic, wildlife and cultural resources would be protected by wilderness management.

Wilderness values on the remaining 34,823 acres would be subjected to the effects of multiple-use resource management including mineral resource development and recreational ORV use.

Naturalness

There would be a slight positive benefit to naturalness as a result of closure of 17,320 acres to ORVs including three miles of vehicle ways. Recreational ORV use of 200 visitor days would be eliminated annually.

In the designated portion of the WSA construction of one livestock reservoir would impair naturalness on less than one acre and reduce the perception of naturalness on approximately 40 acres north of Little High Rock Canyon. Impacts would not be significant due to the widely scattered project locations.

In the designated portion of the WSA the proposed archaeological excavation would slightly improve naturalness of a currently disturbed site by backfilling the site to approximate original contours once excavation is completed.

The woody vegetation planting and prescribed burning along the riparian zone of Little High Rock Canyon would moderately improve naturalness in the designated portion of the WSA through the restoration of natural plant communities. The reintroduction of bighorn sheep would slightly increase naturalness in the designated portion by restoration of a native wildlife species to historic habitat.

Consequences

Gathering of wild horses and burros from both the designated and non-designated portion of the WSA would slightly improve naturalness by reducing the potential for over-grazing.

On the 34,823 acres not designated as wilderness an increase of 200 visitor days of recreational ORV use to 900 visitor days on 32 miles of vehicle way would maintain approximately 40 acres in a non-natural condition and reduce the perception of naturalness on approximately 400 acres.

Construction of three small livestock reservoirs on the northern portion of the WSA would result in a loss of naturalness on approximately three acres and reduce the perception of naturalness on approximately 120 acres in the non-designated portion. Development of a 700 acre seeding on the southern portion of the WSA would eliminate naturalness on the seeding site. The perception of naturalness for most visitors would be affected only slightly since seeding sites regain enough sagebrush cover to appear somewhat natural in appearance within 3 years.

Construction of two small chukar guzzlers in the non-designated portion of the WSA near the eastern boundary would negligibly reduce naturalness on less than ¼ acre and reduce the perception of naturalness on approximately 5 acres.

Naturalness would be lost or approximately 300 acres near the southern edge of the WSA due to development of an open pit mine for precious metals. Although the actual mining activities would only last for three to five years, the limited reclamation would not restore natural conditions. The perception of naturalness would be eliminated on approximately 600 acres.

Total impacts to naturalness within the designated portion of the WSA include approximately 10 acres of surface disturbance and reduction of the perception of naturalness on approximately 150 acres. On the non-wilderness portion of the WSA naturalness would be reduced by surface disturbance on 1,000 acres and the perception of naturalness would be reduced on approximately 1,500 acres.

Solitude

Opportunities for solitude would improve on 17,320 acres in the designated portion of the WSA primarily as a result of the elimination of 200 visitor days of recreational ORV use. Since contact between ORV users and other users is infrequent, there would be only a slight positive affect due to closure of the area to recreational ORV use.

Livestock maintenance activities in the designated portion of the WSA would remain at existing levels of approximately 3 vehicle trips annually with 3 additional trips every 5 years. Sheepherding camps would continue to require vehicle support in the spring and fall with no increase in use projected. Existing low level predator control flights would also continue in spring and fall in conjunction with the sheepherding.

Construction of one additional reservoir would impact solitude during the two days of construction due to 3 vehicle trips along access routes to the site. This would be a negligible impact to solitude.

The project work associated with archaeological excavations and habitat improvement in Little High Rock Canyon would negligibly reduce solitude during a few days each year over a five-year period.

Wild horse and burros would be gathered from the WSA every 3 to 4 years. A helicopter would be used to herd the animals to a trap site outside of the WSA. Solitude would be disrupted over a 2 to 3 day period while the herding occurs. However, impacts on solitude would be negligible.

On the 34,823 acres of the WSA not proposed for wilderness, construction of 3 livestock reservoirs would result in up to 4 vehicle trips over a 2 to 3 day period for each reservoir. Solitude would be disrupted for other recreation users in the vicinity of the construction sites and along the access ways. However, contact with other users would be minimal since these reservoirs are planned for the northern portion of the WSA while recreation use is concentrated primarily in the central portion of the WSA.

Development of a 700 acre seeding on the southern end of the WSA would disrupt solitude for approximately one week in the spring for sagebrush control and one week in the fall for seeding. Contact with visitors would be limited because most visitor activity is concentrated in the central portion of the WSA. The impact to opportunities for solitude would be slight.

Livestock maintenance activities outside the designated portion of the WSA would continue with approximately 7 vehicle trips annually plus an additional 4 vehicle trips every 5 years for cyclic maintenance of the 3 new reservoirs. This increase would have only a marginal affect on solitude. Retreatment of the existing spray area and the seeding would disrupt solitude for approximately one to two weeks every 15 to 20 years when the aerial reapplication of herbicides is conducted.

Solitude on approximately 600 acres at the southern end of the WSA would be foregone while an open pit mining operation was conducted. This activity would last for an estimated three to five years.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation primarily hiking and horseback riding throughout the designated portion of the WSA would be slightly improved as no development activities are projected and 200 visit days of recreational ORV use would be eliminated.

In the non-wilderness portion of the WSA development of the open pit mine on 300 acres along the southern edge of the WSA would diminish opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation by increasing mining activity in the area.

Consequences

Special Features

Wilderness designation would provide legislative protection for the scenic, cultural or wildlife values of Little High Rock Canyon in addition to the existing planning which is designed to ensure the protection of those values. South of Little High Rock Canyon the scenic and wildlife values would be slightly improved by wilderness designation due to the elimination of 200 visitor days annually of recreational ORV use and surface disturbances associated with the ORV use.

The portion of the WSA not designated as wilderness does not have the identified special features that the designated portion does, therefore there would be no impacts to special features.

Conclusion:

Designation of 52,845 acres as wilderness would result in a net benefit to the area's wilderness values particularly naturalness and solitude due to the elimination of 200 visitor days of recreational ORV use annually. The WSAs most spectacular scenery and wildlife habitat in the canyons as well as its naturalness, solitude and opportunities for primitive recreation would be retained.

On the 34,823 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a slight reduction in naturalness and solitude due to continued ORV use of 800 to 1,000 visitor days annually. Development and maintenance of two vegetative treatment areas as well as an open pit mine and continued ORV use would diminish naturalness and solitude on approximately 6,000 acres. Development of other projects would have negligible localized reductions in naturalness and solitude.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

All grazing facilities would be maintained as they are now. A 700 acre seeding would be completed, as would 4 small livestock reservoirs.

There would be no impacts to grazing facility maintenance and construction.

Conclusion:

There would be no impacts to grazing facility maintenance and construction.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Wilderness designation would close 17,320 acres to recreational ORV use. Recreational vehicle use of approximately 200 visitor days annually would be eliminated from the designated portion. Public lands nearby (both inside and outside the WSA) offer similar or better opportunities for recreational ORV use. Therefore, recreational use foregone would be absorbed on surrounding public lands or within the non-designated portion of the WSA where use is expected to slowly increase to 900 visitor days from the current 700 visitor days.

Conclusion:

Recreational ORV use would be foregone on 17,320 acres designated wilderness with 200 visitor days foregone annually. The impacts of shifting of the use to other public lands would be negligible.

On the 34,823 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would increase by 200 visitor days.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

All lands within the 17,320 acres designated as wilderness would be withdrawn from mineral entry and leasing. Development of potential mineral resources would be foregone. This includes almost no potential for oil and gas or geothermal and low potential for metallic minerals. It is assumed that no production sufficient to support commercial development would be foregone. Therefore, the impacts on mineral resource development would be negligible.

All of the 34,823 acres not designated as wilderness would remain open for mineral entry and leasing. All potential mineral resources would be open for development. Minerals exploration would be expected only on the southern portion of the WSA where development of a 300 acre open pit mine for precious metals would be expected in the long term. No oil and gas or geothermal leasing or exploration would be expected. Although the western portion of the WSA has potential for uranium, no development would be anticipated.

Conclusion:

There would be no impact on mineral resource development. Known deposits of precious metals would be available for development.

Adverse Impacts Which Cannot Be Avoided

Continued use of 32 miles of vehicle ways on 34,823 acres of the WSA would result in slight adverse impacts due to recreational ORV use. However due to the low level of use and its dispersed nature, these impacts would be negligible. Mining activity would create adverse impacts associated with 300 acres of surface disturbance for development of an open pit mine.

Relationship Between Local Short-term Uses of Man's Environment and the Maintenance and Enhancement of Long Term Productivity

If the WSA is not designated wilderness, all present, short-term uses would continue. For the WSA there are many ongoing uses including hunting, hiking, livestock grazing, wildlife management (deer, antelope, sage grouse), and potentially, mining exploration and development. Under the Proposed Action, most future development options will remain open and long-term productivity is not likely to be impacted. However, without wilderness designation, the possibility of activities (for example, increased mineral development) that could reduce long-term productivity is greater than under wilderness designation.

Consequences

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

Activities such as mining could create an irreversible commitment of the wilderness resource in part or all of a WSA, if it is not designated as wilderness. In the event mineral development does occur, an estimated 300 acres of the WSA would be disturbed.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

52,143 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
0 Acres Non-wilderness

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the entire 52,143 acres of public land in the Little High Rock Canyon WSA would be designated as wilderness. Additionally, two parcels totalling 130 acres of private land would be designated if acquired and approximately 600 acres of public land surrounded by the WSA would be designated as wilderness.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to elimination of recreational ORV use, minerals development, construction of some range management facilities and the protection of wilderness values.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Under the all wilderness alternative all 52,143 acres of the WSA, plus an additional 730 acres, would be protected by statute. Wilderness values of size, naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be protected. Additionally, scenic quality, would be protected by special wilderness management.

Naturalness

The closure of the entire WSA to recreational ORVs and the resulting elimination of 900 visitor days of ORV use would negligibly enhance the perception of naturalness on the northern and western portions of the WSA. However the nature of the topography and vegetation would make enforcement of closures almost impossible resulting in some continuation of ORV use. Any barriers on existing ways or roads could easily be bypassed by recreational ORV users, primarily hunters. Cross country travel over much of the upland benches is relatively common and would continue to occur as visitors avoid long walks over open terrain. This illegal activity would not allow increases in the perception of naturalness on perhaps half of the WSA.

Construction of four livestock reservoirs would impair naturalness on less than four acres and reduce the perception of naturalness on approximately 160 acres north of Little High Rock Canyon. Impacts would not be significant due to the widely scattered project locations. Retreatment of the 5,500 acre spray area on the western portion of the WSA through prescribed burning at 25-year intervals would have negligible impacts on naturalness

since fire is a historic part of the Great Basin environment. The burning would reduce the perception on naturalness on the site for approximately one year after the burning.

The proposed archaeological excavation would slightly improve naturalness of a currently disturbed site by backfilling the site to approximate original contours once excavation is completed.

The woody vegetation planting and prescribed burning along the riparian zone of Little High Rock Canyon would moderately improve naturalness through the restoration of natural plant communities. The reintroduction of bighorn sheep would slightly increase naturalness by restoration of a native wildlife species to historic habitat.

Gathering of wild horses and burros from the WSA would slightly improve naturalness by reducing the potential for over-grazing.

Construction of two small chukar guzzlers near the eastern boundary would negligibly reduce naturalness on less than ¼ acre and reduce the perception of naturalness on approximately 5 acres.

Total impacts to naturalness include approximately 20 acres of surface disturbance and reduction of the perception of naturalness on more than 5,500 acres.

Solitude

Opportunities for solitude would improve slightly on 52,143 acres due to elimination of 900 visitor days recreational ORV use annually. Non-motorized recreation use would increase from the current 100 visitor days to 500 visitor days annually. Substantial increases in opportunities for solitude would not be noticed due to the continued presence of illegal ORV activities as discussed under naturalness. The increase in non-motorized recreation use would not noticeably affect solitude primarily due to the low number of visitors.

Livestock maintenance activities in the designated portion of the WSA would remain at existing levels of approximately 10 vehicle trips annually, plus and additional 15 trips every 5 years for livestock reservoir maintenance. Sheepherding camps would continue to require vehicle support in the spring and fall with no increase in use projected. Existing low level predator control flights would also continue in spring and fall in conjunction with the sheepherding. Construction of four additional reservoirs would impact solitude during the 10 days of construction. Construction would require 12 additional vehicle trips along access routes into the project sites. Because of the short time-frame, there would be negligible impacts on opportunities for solitude.

The project work associated with archaeological excavations and habitat improvement in Little High Rock Canyon would negligibly reduce solitude during a few days each year over a five-year period.

Wild horse and burros would be gathered from the WSA every 3 to 4 years. A helicopter would be used to herd the animals to a trap site outside of the WSA. Solitude would be disrupted over a 2 to 3 day period while the herding occurs. However, impacts on solitude would be negligible.

Prescription burning of 5,500 acres on a 25-year cycle would disrupt solitude for approximately one month of preparation work and actual burning each time the burning is carried out. Most of the activity would be confined to the 3 days of actual burning when 8 vehicles would be onsite. However, this localized project would only slightly reduce solitude overall.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would be slightly improved over existing levels as 900 visitor days of recreational ORV use is eliminated. However, because much of the best opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation occur in portions of the WSA without ORV access such as in Little High Rock Canyon the improvement would be slight.

Special Features

Wilderness protection would slightly benefit the special features of wildlife, cultural resources, and scenic values by reducing the impacts of the human presence.

Conclusion:

All wilderness values would receive long-term Congressional protection. Wilderness values would be slightly enhanced on 52,873 acres of the Little High Rock Canyon WSA. Illegal recreational ORV use on the upland areas would moderately degrade opportunities for solitude on approximately half of the WSA.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

All grazing facilities except for the Denio spray area would be maintained as they are now. The spray area would be maintained with prescribed burning instead of retreatment with herbicides. This would require waiting longer between retreatments than would occur with herbicides to allow brush densities to increased to where a fire would effectively carry. A 700 acre seeding project in the Leadville Allotment which would provide an additional 130 AUMs of livestock use would not be developed. This additional forage is needed to provide livestock rest periods on native range within the allotment while maintaining existing livestock use levels.

Conclusion:

On the Denio Allotment, available forage would be reduced due to restrictions on retreatment of the spray area. On the Leadville Allotment, 150 AUMs of forage needed in implementation of a

management plan would not be available. There would be no impacts to grazing facility maintenance and construction of the Bare and Massacre Mountain Allotments.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Wilderness designation would close the entire 52,143 acre Little High Rock Canyon WSA, plus an additional 730 acres to all forms of recreational ORV use. Recreational ORV use of 900 visitor days would be eliminated annually. Public lands near the WSA offer similar opportunities for recreational ORV use. Therefore, the foregone recreational use would be absorbed on surrounding public lands.

Conclusion:

Recreational ORV use would be foregone on 52,143 acres designated wilderness with approximately 900 visitor days of recreational ORV use foregone annually. The impacts of shifting the use to other public lands would be negligible.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

All lands within the Little High Rock Canyon WSA, plus an additional 730 acres would be withdrawn from mineral entry and leasing. Development of potential mineral resources would be foregone. This includes a moderate potential for development of a 300 acres open pit mine for precious metals, almost no potential for geothermal or oil and gas and low potential for uranium.

Conclusion:

Development of potential mineral resources would be foregone. This would preclude development of a potential gold mine.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

45,643 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
6,500 Acres Non-wilderness

Under the Partial Wilderness Alternative, 45,643 acres would be designated as wilderness and 6,500 acres would not be designated. Additionally, two parcels totalling 130 acres of private land would be designated if acquired and approximately 600 acres of public land surrounded by the WSA would be designated as wilderness. The major scenic, wildlife and cultural values would be under wilderness management.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to the protection of wilderness values, the impacts on mineral development and the reduction of recreational ORV use.

Consequences

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Under the Partial Wilderness Alternative, 45,643 acres of the Little High Rock Canyon WSA, plus an additional 730 acres, would be designated as wilderness and 6,500 acres would not be designated. The designated portion would receive special wilderness protective management as provided by legislation. The area's naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, as well as the supplemental features of topography, vegetation, visual quality, wildlife and cultural resources would be protected by special wilderness management.

Wilderness values on the remaining 34,823 acres would be subjected to the effects of multiple-use resource management including mineral resource development and recreational ORV use.

Naturalness

There would be a slight positive benefit to naturalness as a result of closure of 45,643 acres including 25 miles of vehicle ways which would eliminate 850 visitor annually of recreational ORV use. Continued illegal ORV activity would reduce the levels of perception of naturalness on large areas of the WSA as discussed for the All Wilderness Alternative.

In the designated portion of the WSA construction of four livestock reservoirs would impair naturalness on less than four acres and reduce the perception of naturalness on approximately 160 acres north of Little High Rock Canyon. Major maintenance of 16 reservoirs scattered throughout the designated portion on 15-year intervals would maintain unnatural conditions on approximately 1 acre per site. The perception of naturalness would continue to be slightly reduced on approximately 40 acres per site. Maintenance of 5 spring developments and 11¼ miles of fence would have slight localized impacts to naturalness due to the unobtrusive nature of the project maintenance. Impacts would not be significant due to the widely scattered project locations.

In the designated portion of the WSA the proposed archaeological excavation would slightly improve naturalness of a currently disturbed site by backfilling the site to approximate original contours.

The woody vegetation planting and prescribed burning would moderately improve naturalness in the designated portion of of Little High Rock Canyon through the restoration of natural plant communities. The reintroduction of bighorn sheep would slightly increase naturalness in the designated portion by restoration of a native wildlife species to historic habitat.

Gathering of wild horses and burros from both the designated and non-designated portion of the WSA would slightly improve naturalness by reducing the potential for over-grazing.

On the 6,500 acres not designated as wilderness, continued use of 10 miles of vehicle way by recreational ORV use would reduce the perception of

naturalness on approximately 600 acres. The continued use of 10 miles of way would maintain approximately 10 acres in a non-natural condition and reduce the perception of naturalness on approximately 100 acres.

Development of a 700 acre seeding on the southern portion of the WSA would eliminate naturalness on the seeding site. The perception of naturalness for most visitors would be affected only slightly since seeding sites regain enough sagebrush cover to appear somewhat natural in appearance.

Maintenance of 4 new livestock reservoirs, widely scattered through the WSA would maintain non-natural features on less than 5 acres. The perception of naturalness would continue to be reduced on approximately 40 acres per site.

Construction of two small chukar guzzlers in the non-designated portion of the WSA near the eastern boundary would negligibly reduce naturalness on less than ¼ acre and reduce the perception of naturalness on approximately 5 acres.

Total impacts to naturalness within the designated portion of the WSA include approximately 4 acres of surface disturbance and reduction of the perception of naturalness on approximately 160 acres. On the non-wilderness portion of the WSA naturalness would be reduced by surface disturbance on 700 acres and the perception of naturalness would be reduced on approximately 700 acres.

Solitude

Opportunities for solitude would improve on 45,643 acres in the designated portion of the WSA primarily as a result of the elimination of 500 visitor days of recreational ORV use. Since contact between ORV users and other users is infrequent, there would be only a slight positive affect due to closure of the area to recreational ORV use.

Livestock facility maintenance activities in the designated portion of the WSA would remain at existing levels of approximately 3 vehicle trips annually with 3 additional trips every 5 years for livestock reservoir maintenance. Sheepherding camps would continue to require vehicle support in the spring and fall with no increase in use projected. Existing low level predator control flights would also continue in spring and fall in conjunction with the sheepherding. Construction of 4 additional reservoirs would slightly reduce solitude during the two days of construction in conjunction with the 12 vehicle trips along access routes.

The project work associated with archaeological excavations and habitat improvement in Little High Rock Canyon would negligibly reduce solitude during a few days each year over a five-year period.

Wild horse and burros would be gathered from the WSA every 3 to 4 years. A helicopter would be used to herd the animals to a trap site outside of the WSA. Solitude would be disrupted over a 2 to 3 day period while the herding occurs. However, impacts on solitude would be negligible.

Consequences

On the 6,500 acres of the WSA not proposed for wilderness, construction of 4 livestock reservoirs would result in up to 4 vehicle trips over a 2 to 3 day period for each reservoir. Solitude would be disrupted for other recreation users in the vicinity of the construction sites and along the access ways. However, contact with other users would be minimal since these reservoirs are planned for the northern portion of the WSA while recreation use is concentrated primarily in the central portion of the WSA.

Livestock facility maintenance activities would continue in the non-wilderness portion of the WSA with 7 vehicle trips annually plus an additional 20 vehicle trips every 5 years for cyclic maintenance of reservoirs. This increase would have only a marginal affect on solitude. Retreatment of the existing spray area and the seeding would disrupt solitude for approximately one to two weeks every 15 to 20 years when the aerial reapplication of herbicides is conducted.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation throughout the designated portion of the WSA would be slightly improved as no development activities are projected and 500 visit days of recreational ORV use would be eliminated.

In the non-designated portion development of a 700 acre seeding and retreatment of the 5,500 acre spray area would disrupt opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation during the actual work periods which would occupy only a several month period every 15 to 20 years.

Special Features

Wilderness protection would have no impacts on the scenic, cultural or wildlife values of Little High Rock Canyon because the existing planning is designed to ensure the protection of those values. South and north of Little High Rock Canyon the scenic and wildlife values would be slightly improved by wilderness designation due to the elimination of 500 visitor days annually of recreational ORV use and surface disturbances associated with the ORV use.

The portion of the WSA not designated as wilderness does not have the identified special features that the designated portion does, therefore there would be no impacts to special features.

Conclusion:

Designation of 34,643 acres as wilderness would result in a net benefit to the area's wilderness values particularly naturalness and solitude due to the elimination of 500 visitor days of recreational ORV use annually. The WSAs most spectacular scenery and wildlife habitat in the canyons as well as its naturalness, solitude and opportunities for primitive recreation would be retained. Continued illegal ORV use would slightly degrade solitude and the perception of naturalness over half of the WSA.

On the 6,500 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a slight reduction in naturalness and solitude due to continued ORV use of 800 to 1,000 visitor days annually. Development and maintenance of two vegetative treatment areas would diminish naturalness and solitude on approximately 6,000 acres. The perception of naturalness would be lost on approximately 6,000 acres due to the same projects as well as continuing ORV use. Development of other projects would have negligible localized reductions in naturalness and solitude.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

All grazing facilities would be maintained as they are now. A 700 acre seeding would be completed, as would 4 small livestock reservoirs.

Conclusion:

There would be no impacts to grazing facility maintenance and construction.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Wilderness designation would close 46,373 acres of the Little High Rock Canyon WSA to all forms of recreational ORV use. Visitor use associated with ORVs drop from approximately 1,000 visitor days to 500 visitor days annually. Public lands near the WSA offer similar opportunities for recreational ORV use. Therefore, the foregone recreational use would be absorbed on surrounding public lands.

Conclusion:

Recreational ORV use would be foregone on 46,373 acres designated wilderness with approximately 500 visitor use days foregone annually. The impacts of shifting of the use to other public lands would be negligible.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

All lands within the 46,343 acres designated as wilderness would be withdrawn from mineral entry and leasing. Development of potential mineral resources would be foregone. This includes high potential for development of an open pit mine for precious metals, almost no potential for geothermal or oil and gas, and low potential for uranium.

On the 6,500 acres not designated as wilderness, all lands would be available for mineral leasing and entry. No impacts to mineral development would occur on the non-designated area.

Conclusion:

Development of potential mineral resources would be foregone on almost all of the WSA. This would preclude potential development of a gold mine. On the area open for mineral development no activity would be anticipated.

NO WILDERNESS/NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

0 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
52,143 Acres Non-wilderness

Under this alternative, none of the 52,143 acre Little High Rock Canyon WSA would be designated as wilderness.

The primary impacts of this alternative relate to the development of mineral resources and range management facilities, as well as recreational ORV use on wilderness values.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The entire 52,143 acre WSA would not be designated wilderness, therefore, none of the wilderness values of naturalness, solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would receive special statutory protection provided by designation. The primary impacts of this proposal are related to naturalness and solitude in conjunction with minerals exploration and recreational ORV use.

Naturalness

Impacts on naturalness and the perception of naturalness form developments including mining, cultural resources, wild horse gathering, habitat management and livestock grazing facilities would be the same as discussed for the Proposed Action since all projects would be the same.

The continued presence of recreational ORVs would lead to a slight decrease in the perception of naturalness over existing levels as visitor use increases over the next 15 to 20 years from 900 visitor days to 1,000 visitor days per year.

Solitude

Impacts on opportunities for solitude would be as described for the Proposed Action. Although ORV use would be permitted on an additional 17,320 acres, the rugged terrain and an increase of 100 ORV visitor days in the additional area make any differences between the two alternatives insignificant.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Impacts on opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would be as described for the Proposed Action. As with solitude, the increased ORV use potential is so slight that differences between the alternatives is negligible.

Special Features

The most significant cultural, wildlife and scenic values would continue to receive special consideration under the High Rock ACEC management. Therefore, there would be no significant impacts on special features.

Conclusions:

Over the next 15 to 20 years the wilderness value of naturalness would be lost on approximately 6,500 acres of the 52,143 acre WSA. This would occur through development of a mine (300 acres) for precious metals, and through construction and maintenance of livestock and wildlife management facilities. On the remainder of the WSA, the naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be slightly degraded primarily due to increased levels of recreational ORV use.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

All grazing facilities would be maintained as they are now. a 700 acre seeding would be completed, as would three to five small stock reservoirs.

Conclusion:

There would be no impacts to grazing facility maintenance and construction.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

The entire WSA would remain open to recreational ORV use. Over the long term, ORV use would rise from approximately 900 to 1,000 visitor days annually.

Conclusion:

Recreational ORV use is expected to increase over the long term by 100 visitor use days. Therefore, there would be no impacts to recreational
ORV use.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

All of the 52,143 acres not withdrawn from the ACEC would remain open for mineral entry and leasing. All potential mineral resources would be open for development. Minerals exploration would be expected only on the southern portion of the WSA where development of a mine would be expected in the long term. No oil and gas or geothermal leasing or exploration would be expected. Although the western portion of the WSA has potential for uranium, no development would be anticipated.

Conclusion:

There would be no impacts to mineral resource development.

YELLOW ROCK CANYON
(CA-020-913A)

PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS)

0 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
13,050 Acres Non-wilderness

Under the Proposed Action, none of the 13,050 acre Yellow Rock Canyon WSA would be designated as wilderness.

The primary impacts of the Proposed Action relate to impacts to wilderness values.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The entire 13,050 acre WSA would not be designated as wilderness and none of the wilderness values of naturalness, solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would be protected by legislative action. The primary impacts of this proposal relate to naturalness and solitude resulting from mineral exploration and recreational ORV use.

Naturalness

The continued use of the northeastern portion of the WSA by recreational ORVs would continue at the current use level of 450 visitor days. The continuing use of 2 miles of vehicle ways would maintain approximately 3 acres in an un-natural condition. The ways reduce the perception of naturalness on 80 acres.

Surface disturbance associated with the construction of four small reservoirs would impair the natural character on less than five acres and reduce the perception of naturalness on approximately 160 acres on the northern portion of the WSA.

Surface disturbance associated with mineral exploration on the northwestern portion of the WSA would impair naturalness on approximately 10 acres and the perception of naturalness on approximately 800 acres. Naturalness, on the vast majority of the WSA would be unaffected by minerals exploration.

Reintroduction of bighorn sheep into the High Rock area would result in a slight increase in the naturalness of the WSA due to use by a native species.

Total surface disturbance within the WSA would be approximately 4 acres. The new surface disturbing activities and continued maintenance and use of vehicle ways would reduce the perception of naturalness on approximately 1,000 acres.

Solitude

Recreational ORV use would remain at existing levels of 450 visitor days unchanged.

Construction of four additional reservoirs in the northern portion of the WSA would result in 12 vehicle trips over a two week period. Solitude would be disrupted during this period in the vicinity of the projects and along the access routes. Due to the short time frame, this impact would be negligible.

Maintenance of 4 proposed livestock reservoirs would result in 2 additional vehicle trips every 5 years. These activities would have negligible impacts on solitude beyond the existing levels of maintenance. Sheep-herding camps would continue to require vehicle support in the spring and fall with no increase in use projected. Existing low level predator control flights would also continue in spring and fall in conjunction with the sheepherding. Therefore livestock grazing activities are not anticipated to cause any noticeable disruption to solitude over existing levels.

Mining exploration activities would disturb solitude in the northwestern portion of the WSA. During a two week period when exploration holes are being drilled outstanding opportunities for solitude would be foregone on approximately 1,000 acres.

Wild horse and burros would continue to be gathered from the WSA every 3 to 4 years. A helicopter would be used to herd the animals to a trap site outside of the WSA. Solitude would continue to be disrupted over a 2 to 3 day period while the herding occurs. Since there would be no change in wild horse and burro gathering impacts on solitude would not change over the existing levels.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

The only activity within the WSA which would reduce opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would be the mineral exploration in the northwestern portion of the WSA. These activities would affect recreational opportunities on approximately 1,000 acres. The recreational ORV use does not occur in Yellow Rock Canyon where outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are found. Therefore, there would be no impacts on primitive and unconfined recreation.

Special Features

The WSAs diversity of wildlife values as well as high value cultural resource sites and scenic values, are primarily affected by continued livestock grazing management practices. The existing land use plans for the area have identified the special feature for special management consideration and actions. The special features are concentrated in Yellow Rock Canyon where no projects are proposed and ORV access is hampered by rough terrain. Therefore non-designation of the WSA would not provide significant benefits beyond the existing land use plans.

Conclusion:

The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would only be negligibly reduced on 13,050 acres through mineral exploration and continued recreational ORV use.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

The entire WSA would be open to recreational ORV use. Over the long-term, use would not significantly change from the current estimated 450 annual visitor days of recreational ORV use.

Conclusion:

Recreational ORV use would be expected to remain near current use levels. There would be no impact on recreational ORV use.

Adverse Impacts Which Cannot Be Avoided

Mineral exploration activities and the construction of 4 livestock reservoirs could result in some local adverse impacts as a result of surface disturbance. However, since no sensitive species or habitats have been identified and disturbance would only occur on a total of 15 acres throughout the WSA potential, impacts would be minimal.

Relationship Between Local Short-term Uses of Man's Environment and the Maintenance and Enhancement of Long Term Productivity

If the WSA is not designated wilderness, all present, short-term uses would continue. For the WSA there are many ongoing uses including hunting, hiking, livestock grazing, wildlife management (deer, antelope, sage grouse), and potentially, mining exploration. Under the Proposed Action, almost all future development options will remain open and long-term productivity is not likely to be impacted. However, without wilderness designation, the possibility of activities (for example, increased mineral development) that could reduce long-term productivity is greater than under wilderness designation. No development of mineral resources is projected in the WSA.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

Activities such as mining could create an irreversible commitment of the wilderness resource in part or all of a WSA, if it is not designated as wilderness. However, mineral development is not anticipated now or in the foreseeable future. On the whole no irreversible or irretrievable commitments of resources are anticipated.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

13,050 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
0 Acres Non-wilderness

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the entire 13,050 acres of public land in the Yellow Rock Canyon WSA would be designated as wilderness.

The primary impacts under this alternative are related to vehicle closure and impacts on wilderness values.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The all wilderness alternative would result in all 13,050 acres of the WSA being protected by legislative mandate. Wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and the supplemental values of topography, vegetation, visual quality, wildlife and cultural resources would also be protected by wilderness management.

Naturalness

The closure of 13,050 acres to recreational ORV use would slightly enhance the perception of naturalness on 2,000 acres of the northern and western portions of the WSA due to elimination of 450 visitor use days per year of recreational ORV use. The closure of 2 miles of vehicle way would negligibly improve naturalness. Naturalness would be expected to improve only negligibly since existing use levels on ways is currently low and most ways would continue to be used infrequently by livestock permittees on vehicle trips associated with project inspection and maintenance. Additionally, the topography and vegetation of the WSA would make enforcement of ORV closures almost impossible. Any barriers on existing ways or roads could easily be bypassed by hunters, furtrappers or rockhounds. Cross country travel on the upland benches is common and would continue to occur as visitors avoid long walks over open terrain to retrieve big game, rockhound and check trap lines.

Activities associated with livestock grazing including sheepherding, predator control, project development and project maintenance would have the same impacts on naturalness and the perception of naturalness as discussed for the Proposed Action since all actions would be the same.

Reintroduction of bighorn sheep into the High Rock area would result in a slight increase in the naturalness of the WSA due to use by a native species.

Solitude

Opportunities for solitude would improve over existing levels due to the elimination of 450 visitor days of recreational ORV use. However unauthorized recreational ORV use would result in only a minimal improvement of the opportunities for solitude. Impacts on solitude other than the effect of reduce ORV use would be the same as described under the Proposed Action. Activities affecting solitude would be limited to the construction and maintenance of 4 proposed livestock reservoirs.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would remain unchanged or only slightly increase over existing conditions. The major factor which would limit primitive and unconfined recreation beyond existing opportunities would be the unauthorized recreational ORV use. Because the unauthorized ORV use would be low frequency and dispersed, and because the best opportunities for primitive recreation would occur in inaccessible Yellow Rock Canyon, opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would not significantly reduced.

Consequences

Special Features

The special features of a the WSA including cultural resources, high wildlife values and excellent quality scenic values would only be negligibly enhanced by wilderness designation. The existing land use plans for the area already have identified the special features for special management consideration and actions. The special features are concentrated in Yellow Rock Canyon where no projects are proposed and ORV access is hampered by rough terrain. Therefore the special features would receive little if any additional benefits from wilderness designation.

Conclusion:

All wilderness values would receive long-term Congressional protection. Naturalness and opportunities for solitude would only be slightly enhanced over present levels due to continued vehicle travel for range management activities and illegal ORV use. Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and the area's special features would receive little benefit from wilderness designation.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Wilderness designation would close the entire 13,050 acres of the WSA to recreational ORV use. Two miles of vehicle way would be closed. Recreational ORV use of approximately 450 visitor days annually of ORV use would be eliminated from the WSA. Public land that offers similar opportunities for recreational ORV use is located throughout the region. Therefore, recreational ORV use foregone in the WSA would be absorbed on the surrounding public lands.

Conclusion:

Recreational ORV use of 450 visitor days would be foregone annually. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

6,390 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
6,660 Acres Non-wilderness

The Partial Wilderness Alternative would designate 6,390 acres as wilderness and 6,660 acres as non-wilderness.

The primary impacts of this alternative relate to the protection of wilderness values.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

In this alternative 6,390 acres of the Yellow Rock Canyon WSA would be designated as wilderness and 6,660 acres would not be designated. The wilderness values on 6,390 acres would be protected by legislative

mandate. The naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, as well as scenic Yellow Rock Canyon, would be protected by special wilderness management.

Naturalness

Impacts to naturalness would be as discussed for the Proposed Action. Although approximately half the WSA, 6,390 acres would be designated as wilderness all of the activities which would occur under a no wilderness scenario would also take place under this alternative. The designated portion of the WSA is unaccessible to ORVs and would continue to be free of ORV activity in the future. Therefore, the impacts would be the same as described for the Proposed Action.

Solitude

Opportunities for solitude would also be as discussed for the Proposed Action since there would be no difference in the management actions.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would also be as discussed for the Proposed Action.

Special Features

Yellow Rock Canyon would be under wilderness management. However, existing land use plans are written to provide special protection to the wildlife, cultural, and scenic values found in the canyon. Therefore, there would be no significant benefits to the canyon from wilderness designation.

Conclusion

The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation and the special features in Yellow Rock Canyon would be negligibly enhanced by designation if 6,390 acres were designated as wilderness.

On most of the 6,660 acres not designated as wilderness, naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would negligibly decline. Minerals exploration and construction of 4 reservoirs would impair naturalness on 15 acres.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Those portions of the WSA that are accessible to recreational ORV use would remain open for use. The long-term levels of recreational ORV use is expected to remain at approximately 450 visitor days annually.

Conclusion:

Recreational ORV use is expected to remain near current use levels. There would be no significant impact on recreational ORV use.

Consequences

HIGH ROCK CANYON
(CA-020-913B)

PROPOSED ACTION (PARTIAL WILDERNESS)

12,180 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
21,805 Acres Non-wilderness

The Proposed Action for the High Rock Canyon WSA would designate 12,180 acres as wilderness and 21,805 acres as non-wilderness.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to protection of wilderness values and loss of wilderness values on portions of the WSA impacted by mineral exploration, recreational ORV use and watershed structures.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Under this alternative 12,180 acres of the High Rock Canyon WSA would be designated as wilderness. The wilderness values on the 12,180 acres of wilderness would receive special legislative protection provided by designation. The area's naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, as well as outstanding scenic, wildlife and cultural resources would be protected by wilderness management.

Wilderness values on the remaining 21,805 acres would be subjected to the effects of multiple-use resource management including mineral resource development and recreational ORV use.

Naturalness

There would be a slight benefit to the perception of naturalness through the closure of 12,180 acres and 2¼ miles of vehicle ways to recreational ORV use. The closure would result in the elimination of approximately 300 visitor use days annually of recreational ORV use.

On the designated portion development of one spring would disturb naturalness on less than one acre and the perception of naturalness of five acres. Construction of 12 miles of fence would disturb naturalness on 20 acres and disrupt the perception of naturalness on 500 acres. Impacts to naturalness and the perception of naturalness from construction activities would not be significant due to the widely scattered nature of the projects and the localized nature of the impacts.

Gathering of wild horses from both the designated and non-designated portions of the WSA would slightly improve naturalness by reducing the potential for overgrazing.

Reintroduction of bighorn sheep would slightly improve naturalness in both the designated and non-designated portions of the WSA because of the reestablishment of a native species into historic habitat.

On the 21,805 acres not designated as wilderness 1,000 visitor days of use per year on 19½ miles of vehicle ways by recreational ORVs would maintain approximately 30 acres in a non-natural condition. Naturalness and the perception of naturalness would not significantly change over existing levels since the 300 visitor day increase in ORV use levels would continue to use the existing ways.

Construction of four small reservoirs and two watershed structures scattered across the western portion of the WSA would reduce naturalness on less than ten acres and the perception of naturalness on approximately 200 acres in the non-wilderness portion. The watershed control structures would result in a reduction of peak flows in the Grassy and High Rock watersheds and a gradual release of water below the structures in the summer. The combination of water releases and flow reduction would slightly increase naturalness by increasing the rate of riparian community improvement.

Facilities for recreation management including designation of a primitive campground and the improvement of existing facilities at Conlan Camp would result in a surface disturbance of less than two acres in the non-designated portion of the WSA in High Rock Canyon. The impacts would be localized and negligible to naturalness over the entire WSA.

On the non-wilderness portion of the WSA, the archaeological excavation would negligibly impact naturalness due to the small size of the test, pits (less than 10 square yards total) re-contouring of the excavation sites upon completion, and natural revegetation of the disturbed area.

The woody vegetation planting and prescribed burning of several 10 acre blocks would moderately improve naturalness in the non-designated portion of the WSA in High Rock Canyon through the reestablishment of native riparian communities.

Surface disturbance associated with mineral exploration on the north-western portion of the WSA would impair naturalness on five acres and the perception of naturalness of 400 acres. Naturalness on the vast majority of the WSA would be unaffected by minerals exploration.

Total surface disturbance within the WSA would be approximately 20 acres. The perception of naturalness would be reduced on 1,100 acres.

Solitude

Opportunities for solitude would improve on 12,180 acres in the designated portion of the WSA primarily as a result of the elimination of 300 visitor days of recreational ORV use. Since contact between ORV users and other users is infrequent, there would be only a slight positive affect due to closure of the area to recreational ORV use.

Livestock maintenance activities in the designated portion of the WSA would remain at existing levels of approximately 2 vehicle trips annually plus 2 vehicle trips every 5 years. The 4 proposed stock ponds would require an additional 2 vehicle trips every 5 years. Sheepherding camps would continue to require vehicle support in the spring and fall with no increase in use projected. Existing low level predator control flights

would also continue in spring and fall in conjunction with the sheep-herding activities. Development of 1 spring and construction of 12 miles of fence would result in a one time disruption of solitude totalling less than 1 month. The development activities, including 18 vehicle trips, would slightly reduce solitude along the access routes and at project sites.

Wild horses would be gathered from the WSA every 3 to 4 years. A helicopter would be used to herd the animals to a trap site in the southern portion of the WSA in the non-wilderness portion. Solitude would be disrupted over a 2 to 3 day period while the herding occurs. Due to the short time frame solitude would be negligibly impacted.

One the 21,805 acres of the WSA not designated as wilderness construction of 4 livestock reservoirs, 1 spring development, 2 watershed structures and 4 miles of fence would result in a one time disruption of solitude from the 17 vehicle trips, totalling approximately one month. Solitude would be disrupted for recreation users in the vicinity of the construction sites and along access routes. However contacts with other users would be minimal since the projects are widely scattered.

Livestock maintenance activities would continue with approximately 10 vehicle trips annually plus 4 vehicle trips every 5 years. An additional 2 vehicle trips every 5 years would be required for the 4 new reservoirs. This additional activity would negligibly impact solitude beyond existing levels.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation throughout the designated portion of the WSA would be slightly improved as large scale development activities are projected and 300 visitor days of recreational ORV use would be eliminated from the designated portion of the WSA.

An increase of 300 visitor days of recreational ORV use in the non-designated area would not noticeably affect opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation since the ORV use does not coincide with the primitive recreation opportunities in the Canyon Area along the east boundary, where 300 visitor days of ORV use would be eliminated.

The only activity within the non-designated portion of the WSA which would reduce opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would be the minerals exploration in the northern portion of the WSA. These actions would not noticeably reduce primitive and unconfined recreational opportunities, since these activities occur over a short period of time and occur on only 5 acres.

Special Features

Wilderness protection would have limited beneficial affects on the scenic, cultural or wildlife values of High Rock Canyon since the existing planning is designed to ensure the protection of those values. West of High Rock Canyon the scenic and wildlife values would be slightly improved

by wilderness designation due to the elimination of 300 visitor days annually of recreational ORV use and surface disturbances associated with the ORV use on 2½ miles of vehicle ways.

The portion of the WSA not designated as wilderness does not contain the special features identified in the designated portion, therefore there would be no impacts to special features.

Conclusion:

The 12,180 acres of the High Rock Canyon WSA designated as wilderness would receive long term statutory protection. The area's naturalness, opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would negligibly improve due to closure of 2½ miles of vehicle way and elimination of 300 visitor days of recreational ORV use. The area's most spectacular scenic values, cultural resources and wildlife resources would be under wilderness management.

On the 21,805 acres not designated wilderness, naturalness would be lost on less than 50 acres due to mineral exploration and watershed and range management structures. On the remainder of the non-wilderness area, there would be slight reductions in opportunities for solitude due to an increase of 300 visitor days of recreational ORV use.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Wilderness designation would close 12,180 acres to recreational ORV use. Approximately 2½ miles of vehicle way would be closed and 300 visitor days of ORV use would be eliminated. Most of the recreational ORV use occurs within ½ mile of the eastern boundary road in the non-designated area. Recreational ORV use levels would increase by 300 visitor days to 1,300 visitor use days annually over the long-term.

Conclusion:

Closure of 2½ miles of way and 12,180 acres of the designated portion of the WSA to recreational ORV use would result in 300 visitor days of ORV use foregone. However, an increase of 300 visitor days is projected within the non-designated portion of the WSA. This increase would offset the loss in the designated area resulting in minimal displacement of current ORV use.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

All of the 12,180 acres designated as wilderness would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry and mineral leasing. Development of potential mineral resources would be foregone. This includes almost no potential for oil and gas or geothermal and low potential for metallic minerals. It is assumed that no production sufficient to support commercial development would be foregone. Therefore, the impacts on mineral resource development would be negligible.

All of the 21,805 acres not designated as wilderness would remain open for mineral entry and leasing. All potential mineral resources would be open for development. Minerals exploration would be expected only on the northern portion of the WSA and development of a mine would not be anticipated in the next 15 to 20 years based on the low favorability for accumulation of mineral resources. No oil and gas or geothermal leasing or exploration would be anticipated.

Conclusion:

There would be no impacts on mineral resource development. Development of potential mineral resources would be foregone on 12,180 acres. However, no identified resources exist on these lands. Potential mineral resources of 21,805 acres would be available for mineral development.

Impacts on Watershed Management

The two proposed watershed control structures would be constructed because they would be in the non-wilderness portion of the WSA. Therefore, there would be no impacts to watershed management.

Conclusion:

The two proposed structures would be constructed, therefore, there would be no impacts to watershed management.

Adverse Impacts Which Cannot Be Avoided

Mineral resource exploration activities and the construction of 16 miles of fence, 2 spring developments, 2 watershed control structures and 5 small reservoirs could result in some local adverse impacts as a result of surface disturbance. However, since no sensitive species or habitats have been identified and disturbance would only occur on a total of 50 acres widely scattered within the WSA, potential impacts would be minimal.

Relationship Between Local Short-term Uses of Man's Environment and the Maintenance and Enhancement of Long Term Productivity

If the WSA is not designated wilderness, all present, short-term uses would continue. For the WSA there are many ongoing uses including hunting, hiking, livestock grazing, wildlife management (deer, antelope, sage grouse), and potentially, mining exploration and development. Under the Proposed Action, almost all future development options will remain open and long-term productivity is not likely to be impacted. However, without wilderness designation, the possibility of activities (for example, increased mineral development) that could reduce long-term productivity is greater than under wilderness designation.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

Activities such as mining, mineral leasing and material sales, could create an irreversible commitment of the wilderness resource in part or

all of a WSA, if it is not designated as wilderness. However, large-scale development is not anticipated now or in the foreseeable future. In the event mineral development does occur, an estimated 300 acres of the WSA would be disturbed. On the whole, however, no irreversible or irretrievable commitments of resources are anticipated.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

33,985 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
0 Acres Non-wilderness

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the entire 33,985 acres of public land in the High Rock Canyon WSA would be designated as wilderness.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to elimination of recreational ORV use, minerals exploration, watershed control structures and the protection of wilderness values.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Under the All Wilderness Alternative all 33,985 acres of the WSA would be protected by statute. Wilderness values of size, naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be protected. Additionally, the supplemental features of topography, vegetation, visual quality, wildlife and cultural resources would be protected by special wilderness management.

Naturalness

The closure of the entire WSA to ORVs would negligibly enhance the perception of naturalness on the northern and western portions of the WSA by eliminating 1,300 visitor days of recreational ORV use. However, the nature of the topography and vegetation would make enforcement of closures almost impossible. Any barriers on existing ways or roads could easily be bypassed by hunters, trappers or rockhounds. Cross country travel over much of the upland benches ins relatively common and would continue to occur infrequently as visitors avoid long walks over open terrain to retrieve big game, rockhound and check traplines. This illegal activity would not allow significant increases in the perception of naturalness or perhaps half of the eastern portion of the WSA.

Construction of 5 reservoirs would reduce naturalness on approximately 5 acres scattered through the western and northern portion of the WSA. The reservoirs would reduce the perception of naturalness on approximately 40 acres per site. Development of two springs would disturb naturalness on approximately two acres and the perception of naturalness on 10 acres. Construction of 16 miles of fence would reduce naturalness on 25 acres and the perception of naturalness on 750 acres. Maintenance of the five proposed reservoirs every 15 years would maintain un-natural conditions on approximately one acre per site. The perception of naturalness would

continue to be reduced on approximately 40 acres per site. Impacts to naturalness and the perception of naturalness from construction and maintenance activities would not be significant due to the widely scattered nature of the projects and the localized nature of the impacts.

Gathering of wild horses from the WSA would slightly improve naturalness by reducing the potential for overgrazing.

Reintroduction of bighorn sheep would slightly improve naturalness in the WSA due to the reestablishment of a native species into historic habitat.

The small scale archaeological excavation in High Rock Canyon would negligibly impact naturalness due to the small scale of the test pits (less than 10 square yards).

The vegetation plants and prescribed burning in High Rock Canyon would moderately improve naturalness on as much as 40 acres through the reestablishment of native plant communities.

Total surface disturbance would be approximately 50 acres and the perception of naturalness would be reduced on approximately 1,000 acres.

Solitude

Opportunities for solitude would improve slightly on 33,985 acres due to the elimination of approximately 1,300 visitor days annually of recreational ORV use. Substantial increases in opportunities for solitude would not be realized due to the continued presence of illegal ORV activities as discussed under naturalness.

Livestock maintenance activities in the WSA would remain at existing levels of approximately 10 vehicle trips annually. Sheepherding camps would continue to require vehicle support in the spring and fall with no increase in use projected. Existing low level predator control flights would also continue in spring and fall in conjunction with the sheepherding. New construction activities for 5 reservoirs, 2 spring developments and 16 miles of fence would negatively impact solitude for the total of 6 weeks spread over the WSA and over the course of several years. The impacts to solitude from these activities would be negligible.

Maintenance activities associated with the new projects would require one additional vehicle trip per year and 3 additional vehicle trips every 5 years associated with major maintenance activities. This increase in vehicle trips would negligibly reduce solitude.

The project work associated with archaeological excavations and habitat improvement in High Rock Canyon would negligibly reduce solitude during a few days each year over a five year period. The activities would occur within ¼ mile of the eastern boundary road.

Wild horses would be gathered from the WSA every 3 to 4 years. A helicopter would be used to herd the animals to a trap site in the southern portion of the WSA. Solitude would be disrupted over a 2 to 3 day period while the herding occurs. Due to the short time frame solitude would be negligibly impacted.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation throughout the WSA would be slightly improved due to the decrease of 1,300 visitor days annually in recreational ORV use.

Special Features

Wilderness designation would slightly benefit the identified cultural resources, wildlife and scenic values associated with the High Rock Canyon area by slightly reducing potential impacts associated with recreational ORV use. However, existing land use plans, including the High Rock ACEC plan, are designed to protect these values.

Conclusion:

All wilderness values would receive long-term protection. Wilderness values would be slightly enhanced on 33,985 acres of the High Rock Canyon WSA and adjacent split estate lands. Illegal recreation ORV use on the uplands would slightly degrade opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation on approximately two-thirds of the WSA.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Wilderness designation would close the entire 33,985 acre High Rock Canyon WSA including 22 miles of vehicle ways to recreational ORV use. Recreational ORV use of approximately 1,300 visitor days annually would be eliminated. The primary recreational ORV use road, the eastern boundary road, would remain open allowing visitors to walk instead of drive off the boundary road in High Rock Canyon. On the remainder of the WSA, other public lands near the WSA would offer similar opportunities for recreational ORV use and any use foregone would be absorbed on surrounding public lands. Non-motorized use in the WSA would increase by 800 visitor days to a projected total of 1,000 visitor days.

Conclusion:

Recreational ORV use would be foregone on 33,985 acres designated as wilderness with approximately 1,300 visitor days foregone annually. The impacts of shifting the use to other public lands would be negligible.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

All lands within the High Rock Canyon WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry and mineral leasing. Development of potential mineral resources would be foregone. This includes almost no potential for oil and gas or geothermal resources and low potential for metallic minerals (silver, mercury and gold). It is assumed that no production sufficient to support commercial development would be foregone. Therefore, the impacts on mineral resource development would be negligible.

Conclusions:

Development of potential mineral resources would be foregone. Because there would not be any anticipated commercial development of minerals, there will be no significant impacts to mineral resource development.

Impacts on Watershed Management

Two identified watershed management structures would not be constructed. Peak flows in the Grassy watershed would not be reduced and no meadow rehabilitation would take place. This would moderately reduce the rate of riparian community improvement in High Rock Canyon.

Conclusion:

Two control structures would not be constructed. Riparian improvement rates in High Rock Canyon would be moderately reduced.

NO WILDERNESS/NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

0 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
33,985 Acres Non-wilderness

This alternative would designate none of the 33,985 acres of the High Rock Canyon WSA as wilderness.

The primary impacts of this alternative relate to how exploration for minerals, construction of watershed structures and recreational ORV use would affect wilderness values.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The entire 33,985 acre WSA would not be designated wilderness, therefore, none of the wilderness values of naturalness, solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would receive special statutory protection provided by designation. The primary impacts of this proposal relate to naturalness and solitude related to minerals exploration and recreational ORV use.

Naturalness

The continued 1,300 visitor days of recreational ORVs plus an increase of 200 visitor days would lead to a slight decrease in the perception of naturalness over the long term as the 22 miles of existing ways are maintained through use and new ways are established through indescriminant use.

Impacts on naturalness and the perception of naturalness from activities within the WSA associated with mining, cultural resource management, habitat improvement wild horse gathering, watershed structures and grazing would be the same as discussed for the Proposed Action since all activities would be the same.

Solitude

Impacts on opportunities for solitude would be as described for the Proposed Action. The 2¼ miles of vehicle ways that would be closed under the Proposed Action would also be closed under ACEC management. Therefore impacts would be the same for both alternatives.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Impacts on opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would be as described for the Proposed Action. Off-road vehicle use areas on 2¼ miles of trail would be eliminated in the High Rock Canyon as a result of ACEC management.

Special Features

The most significant cultural, wildlife and scenic values would continue to receive special consideration under the High Rock ACEC. Therefore there would be no significant impacts on special features if the area was not designated as wilderness.

Conclusion:

Wilderness values of naturalness, solitude and primitive recreation would be slightly reduced on less than 50 acres over the long-term. Mineral exploration activities, projects to support livestock, wildlife and watershed management and increased levels of recreational ORV use would all contribute to the loss of values. The identified special features would not significantly change.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

All of the WSA with the exception of the 5,000 acre High Rock Canyon ACEC would remain open to recreational ORV use. In spite of the closures, recreational ORV use would rise from approximately 1,300 visitor days to 1,500 visitor days annually.

Conclusion:

Recreational ORV use is expected to increase over the long-term. Therefore, there would be no significant impacts to recreational ORV use.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

All of the 33,985 acres not withdrawn in the ACEC area (5,000 acres) would remain open for mineral entry and leasing. All potential mineral resources would be open for development. Minerals exploration would be expected only on the northern portion of the WSA where limited exploration activities would occur. No oil and gas or geothermal leasing or exploration would be anticipated.

Conclusion:

There would be no impacts to mineral resource development. Potential mineral resources on all but 5,000 acres of the WSA would be available for development, although no development is projected.

Impacts on Watershed Management

The two proposed watershed control structures would be constructed allowing for regulation of peak flows and meadow riparian community revegetation. Therefore, there would be no impacts to watershed management.

Conclusion:

The two proposed structures would be constructed, therefore, there would be no impacts to watershed management.

EAST FORK HIGH ROCK CANYON
(CA-020-914 AND NV-020-006A)

PROPOSED ACTION (PARTIAL WILDERNESS)

33,460 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
21,860 Acres Non-wilderness
160 Acres Private Lands Designated if Acquired

The Proposed Action for the East Fork High Rock Canyon WSA would designate 33,460 acres as wilderness and 21,860 acres non-wilderness.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to protection of wilderness values on the designated portion and loss of wilderness values on portions of the WSA impacted by mining, seedings and horse gathering activities.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Under this alternative 33,620 acres of the East Fork High Rock Canyon WSA would be designated as wilderness. The wilderness values on 33,620 acres of wilderness would receive special legislative protection provided by designation. The area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, as well as outstanding scenic, wildlife and cultural resources would be protected by wilderness management.

Wilderness values on the remaining 21,860 acres would be subjected to the effects of multiple-use management including mineral resource development and recreational ORV use.

Naturalness

There would be a slight positive benefit to the perception of naturalness as a result of closure of 33,460 acres on 15 miles of vehicle ways which would eliminate 300 visitor days annually of recreational ORV use. There are no livestock facilities planned within the designated portion of the WSA. Construction of two artificial water sources (guzzlers) for bighorn sheep east from Pole Canyon would impair naturalness on less than one acre per site. The perception of naturalness would be reduced on five acres per site. Due to the localized nature of the impacts the impacts to naturalness would be negligible.

On the 21,860 acres in the non-wilderness portion of the WSA one additional livestock reservoir and two watershed control structures would be constructed at the northern end of the WSA. These projects would result in a surface disturbance of approximately 21 acres and the perception of naturalness would be reduced by approximately 150 acres total from the three projects. Completion of the watershed structures would locally improve the perception of naturalness on approximately 300 acres downstream of the structure due to reestablishment of meadow vegetation. Development of 3,300 acres of seeding in two blocks at the northern end of the WSA would decrease naturalness on the project sites. The perception of naturalness would be reduced on the same acreage for several years until invasion of sagebrush made the areas look natural in character to most users. Impacts to naturalness and the perception of naturalness from construction activities would not be significant due to the widely scattered nature of the projects and the localized nature of the impacts.

Gathering of wild horses and burros from both the designated and non-designated portions of the WSA would slightly improve naturalness by reducing the potential for overgrazing. The road maintenance required to use the trap site within the non-designated portion of the WSA would continue to require use of a road grader on ¼ mile of way within the WSA ever 3 or 4 years. This activity would not increase because horse management activities would not change over existing levels.

Reintroduction of bighorn sheep would slightly improve naturalness in both the designated and non-designated portions of the WSA because of the re-establishment of a native species into historic habitat.

Planting of woody vegetation and prescription burning of up to 100 acres in High Rock and Pole canyons to improve vegetative conditions would moderately improve naturalness in both the designated and non-designated portions of the WSA.

On the non-wilderness portion of the WSA, the archaeological excavation would negligibly impact naturalness due to the small six of the test pits (less than 5 square yards total).

Naturalness could be lost approximately 300 acres near the eastern edge of the WSA in the non-wilderness portion because of development of an open pit mine. Although the actual mining activities would last for 3 to 5

years, the limited reclamation after the mine closes would not restore natural conditions. The perception of naturalness would be reduced on approximately 1,000 acres.

A two-acre primitive campground on 2 acres in the non-wilderness portion of High Rock Canyon would negligibly reduce naturalness because of the localized nature of the impact.

Total surface disturbance would be approximately 3,650 acres. The perception of naturalness would be reduced on approximately 5,000 acres.

Solitude

Opportunities for solitude would improve on 33,460 acres in the designated portion of the WSA primarily as a result of the elimination of 300 visitor days of recreational ORV use. Since contact between ORV users and other users is infrequent, there would be only a slight positive affect due to closure of the area to recreational ORV use.

Livestock maintenance activities in the designated portion of the WSA would remain at existing levels of approximately 2 vehicle trips annually. Therefore, livestock grazing activities are not anticipated to cause any additional disruption of solitude over the existing use levels in the designated portion of the WSA.

On the 21,860 acres of the WSA not proposed for wilderness, construction of 1 livestock reservoir and 2 watershed structures would result in up to 4 vehicle trips over a 2 to 3 day period for each site. Solitude would be disrupted for other recreation users in the vicinity of the construction sites and along the access ways. However, contact with other users would be minimal since these reservoirs are planned for the eastern and southern portions of the WSA while recreation use is concentrated primarily in High Rock and East Fork Canyons in the western portion of the WSA.

Livestock maintenance activities would continue with approximately 15 vehicle trips annually plus an additional 2 vehicle trips every 5 years for cyclic maintenance of the 3 new sites. This increase would have only a marginal affect on solitude. Retreatment of the new seedings with herbicides every 15 to 20 years to maintain forage production would disrupt solitude for a period of one week for each seeding when the aircraft would be applying the chemicals. Due to the short time frame this would be a negligible impact on solitude.

Wild horse and burros would be gathered from the WSA every 3 to 4 years. A helicopter would be used to herd the animals to a trap site in the northern portion of the WSA in the non-wilderness portion. Solitude would be disrupted over a 2 to 3 day period while the access route is maintained, the herding occurs and the animals are trucked out of the WSA. However recreational use is limited in this portion of the WSA and impacts on solitude would be negligible.

Completion of activities in the non-wilderness portion of High Rock Canyon for archaeological excavations, habitat improvement projects and camp-

ground development would affect solitude for a total of one month spread over five years. Although these activities would occur in the major recreational use areas, the localized nature of the projects and the short duration would negligibly impact solitude.

Mining activities associated with the open pit mine would noticeably reduce opportunities for solitude along the eastern portion of the WSA. Sights and sounds of traffic and construction related to the mine would eliminate outstanding opportunities for solitude on approximately 1,000 acres.

Continuing recreational ORV use of 1,000 visitor days per year and an increase of 300 visitor days per year on 15¼ miles of vehicle ways would irregularly disrupt solitude on the northern and eastern portions of the WSA. Existing use levels of all kinds of recreational users are relatively low and not expected to significantly increase in these areas. Therefore there would be no significant changes to opportunities for solitude over most of the non-wilderness portion of the WSA.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation for hunting, hiking and wildlife observation throughout the designated portion of the WSA would be negligibly improved as no development activities are projected and only 300 visitor days of recreational ORV use would be eliminated.

The only activity within the non-designated portion of the WSA which would reduce opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would be the minerals exploration and development near the eastern boundary. The development of a mine would eliminate primitive and unconfined recreational opportunities or approximately 1,000 acres. This portion of the WSA would not be expected to receive much primitive recreation type use, therefore, the impact of the mine would be negligible.

Special Features

Wilderness protection would have only slight beneficial impacts on the scenic, cultural or wildlife values of High Rock and East Fork High Rock canyons because the existing planning is designed to ensure the protection of those values. North and east of the canyons, the scenic, cultural and wildlife values would be slightly improved by wilderness designation due to the elimination of 300 visitor days annually of recreational ORV use and the surface disturbances associated with ORV use.

The portion of the WSA not designated as wilderness does not have identified special features, therefore there would be no impacts to special features.

Conclusion:

The 33,620 acres of the East Fork High Rock Canyon WSA designated as wilderness would receive long-term statutory protection. The area's naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined

recreation would slightly improve due to restrictions on recreational ORV use. The area's most spectacular scenic values, cultural resources and wildlife resources would not change under wilderness management.

On the 21,860 acres not designated as wilderness, naturalness would be lost on approximately 3,650 acres due to development of two range seedings, an open-pit mine and a number of small range, watershed and wildlife projects. On the remainder of the non-wilderness portion of the WSA there would be slight reductions in opportunities for solitude due to increases in recreational ORV use.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Wilderness designation would close 33,620 acres to recreational ORV use. Approximately 15 miles of vehicle way would be closed to ORV use eliminating 300 visitor days of recreational ORV use. Most of the visitor use occurs within one half mile of the western boundary road and this area would not be designated as wilderness. Therefore, there would be a negligible impact to recreational ORV use areas and use levels in the 21,860 acres not designated as wilderness would increase by 400 use days annually to 1,400 use days over the long-term.

Conclusion:

Closure of 15 miles of way and 33,620 acres to recreational ORV use would eliminate 300 visitor days and only have negligible impacts to ORV users. The area that would be closed currently receives very little ORV use. Recreational ORV use would increase by 400 visitor days in the non-designated portion.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

All lands within the 33,620 acres designated as wilderness would be withdrawn from mineral entry and leasing. Development of potential mineral resources would be foregone. This includes almost no potential for oil and gas or geothermal and low potential for metallic minerals. It is assumed that no production sufficient to support commercial development would be foregone. Therefore, the impacts on mineral resource development would be negligible.

All of the 21,860 acres not designated as wilderness would remain open for mineral entry and leasing. All potential mineral resources would be open for development. Mineral exploration would be expected only on the eastern portion of the WSA where development of a mine would be expected in the long-term. No oil and gas or geothermal leasing or exploration would be expected.

Conclusion:

There would be no impacts to mineral resource development. Development of potential resources on 33,620 acres would be foregone. However, no identified commercial resources exist on these

lands. Potential mineral resources on 21,860 acres would be available for development.

Impacts on Wildlife Management Facilities

All management facilities proposed for wildlife habitat and population management with the exception of two reservoirs east of Pole Canyon would be developed. The two reservoirs could extend the use period for antelope on the upland benches into the late summer period on areas where water is the limiting factor. The reservoirs could slightly increase antelope populations by expanding the year long habitat.

Conclusion:

Two reservoirs would not be constructed. This would preclude a slight increase in antelope population levels on the WSA.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

All grazing facilities would be maintained as they are now. Two seeding areas totalling 3,300 acres (2,000 acres in Nut Mountain and 1,300 acres in Wall Canyon) would be developed as well as one reservoir in the Wall Canyon Allotment. Therefore, there would be no impacts to grazing facility maintenance and construction.

Conclusion:

There would be no impacts to grazing facility maintenance and construction.

Impacts on Watershed Management

The two proposed watershed control structures would be constructed in the non-wilderness portion of the WSA. Therefore, there would be no impacts to watershed management.

Conclusion:

There would be no impacts to watershed management.

Impacts on Wild Horse and Burro Management

The trap site for gathering and the drainage crossings which require road grader maintenance prior to gathering operations would be in the non-wilderness portion of the WSA. Therefore, there would be no impacts to wild horse and burro management.

Conclusion:

There would be no impacts to wild horse and burro management.

Adverse Impacts Which Cannot Be Avoided

Mineral development activities and the construction of one livestock reservoir, 2 guzzlers and 2 watershed management structures would result in some localized adverse impacts as a result of surface disturbance. However, since the disturbances would occur on areas without sensitive features and the disturbance would be restricted to 320 acres near the boundaries, potential impacts would be minimal.

Relationship Between Local Short-term Uses of Man's Environment and the Maintenance and Enhancement of Long Term Productivity

If the WSA is not designated wilderness, all present, short-term uses would continue. For the WSA there are many ongoing uses including hunting, hiking, livestock grazing, wildlife management (deer, antelope, sage grouse), and potentially, mining exploration and development. Under the Proposed Action, almost all future development options will remain open and long-term productivity is not likely to be impacted. However, without wilderness designation, the possibility of activities (for example, increased mineral development) that could reduce long-term productivity is greater than under wilderness designation.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

Activities such as mining, mineral leasing and material sales, could create an irreversible commitment of the wilderness resource in part or all of a WSA, if it is not designated as wilderness. However, large-scale development is not anticipated now or in the foreseeable future. In the event mineral development does occur, an estimated 300 acres of the WSA would be disturbed. On the whole, however, no irreversible or irretrievable commitments of resources are anticipated.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

55,320 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
0 Acres Non-wilderness
160 Acres Private Land to be Designated if Acquired

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the entire 55,320 acres of public land in the East Fork High Rock Canyon WSA would be designated as wilderness. A 160 acre private parcel would also be designated if acquired.

The primary impacts under the alternative relate to protection of wilderness values and the elimination of recreational ORV use, minerals development, wild horse trapping within the WSA, watershed structures and range projects.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, a total of 55,480 acres including split estate and private lands would be protected by statute. Wilderness values of size, naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive

recreation would be protected. Additionally the supplemental values of topography, vegetation, visual quality, wildlife and cultural resources would be protected by special wilderness management.

Naturalness

The closure of the entire WSA to ORVs would negligibly enhance the perception of naturalness on the northern and eastern portions of the WSA by eliminating 1,300 visitor days of recreational ORV use. However, the nature of the topography and vegetation would make enforcement of closures almost impossible. Any barriers on existing ways or roads could easily be bypassed by hunters, trappers or rockhounds. Cross country travel over much of the upland benches ins relatively common and would continue to occur infrequently as visitors avoid long walks over open terrain to retrieve big game, rockhound and check traplines. This illegal activity would not allow significant increases in the perception of naturalness or perhaps a third of the WSA.

Construction of one reservoirs would reduce naturalness on approximately one acre at the northern portion of the WSA. The reservoir would reduce the perception of naturalness on approximately 40 acres. Construction of two artificial water sources (guzzlers) for bighorn sheep east from Pole Canyon would impair naturalness on less than one acre per site. The perception of naturalness would be reduced on five acres per site. Due to the localized nature of the impacts, the impacts to naturalness would be negligible. Impacts to naturalness and the perception of naturalness from construction activities would not be significant due to the widely scattered nature of the projects and the localized nature of the impacts.

Gathering of wild horses from to trap sites outside the WSA would slightly improve naturalness by reducing the potential for overgrazing.

Reintroduction of bighorn sheep would slightly improve naturalness in the WSA due to the reestablishment of a native species into historic habitat.

Planting of woody vegetation and prescription burning of up to 100 acres in High Rock and Pole canyons to improve vegetative conditions would moderately improve naturalness in both the designated and non-designated portions of the WSA.

The small scale archaeological excavations in High Rock Canyon would negligibly impact naturalness due to the small scale of the test pits (less than 5 square yards).

Total surface disturbance would be approximately 3 acres. The perception of naturalness would be reduced on 50 acres.

Solitude

Opportunities for solitude would improve slightly on 52,320 acres due to the elimination of 1,300 visitor days annually of recreational ORV use. Substantial increases in opportunities for solitude would not be realized due to the continued presence of illegal ORV activities as discussed under naturalness.

Consequences

Livestock maintenance activities in the WSA would remain at existing levels of approximately 10 vehicle trips annually. Construction activity for one reservoir and two wildlife water guzzlers would disrupt solitude for a total of three weeks at three widely dispersed sites. The impacts to solitude from these activities would be negligible due to the isolated nature of the actions and because the activities would require only 10 vehicle trips outside the major recreational use area.

The project work associated with archaeological excavations and habitat improvement in High Rock Canyon would negligibly reduce solitude during a few days each year over a five year period. The activities would occur within ¼ mile of the eastern boundary road.

Wild horses would be gathered from the WSA every 3 to 4 years. A helicopter would be used to heard the animals to a trap site in the southern portion of the WSA. Solitude would be disrupted over a 2 to 3 day period while the herding occurs. Due to the short time frame solitude would be negligibly impacted.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation throughout the WSA would be slightly improved due to the elimination of recreational ORV use of 1,300 visitor days annually.

Special Features

Wilderness designation would slightly benefit the identified cultural resources, wildlife and scenic values associated with the High Rock Canyon area by slightly reducing potential impacts associated with recreational ORV use.

Conclusion:

All wilderness values would receive long-term protection. Naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would be slightly enhanced on 55,480 acres of the East Fork High Rock Canyon WSA and other designated lands. Illegal recreational ORV use on the northern and eastern uplands would slightly degrade opportunities for solitude and approximately one third of the WSA.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Wilderness designation would close the entire 55,320 acre High Rock Canyon WSA and 160 acres of private land to recreational ORV use. Recreational ORV use of 1,300 visitor days per year would be eliminated. The primary recreational ORV use road, the western boundary road would remain open causing visitors to walk instead of drive off the boundary road in High Rock Canyon. On the remainder of the WSA other public lands near the WSA offer similar opportunities for recreational ORV use and any use foregone would be absorbed on surrounding public lands.

Conclusion:

Recreational ORV use would be foregone on 55,480 acres designated as wilderness with 1,300 visitor days lost annually. The impact of shifting the use to other public lands would be negligible.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

All lands within the East Fork High Rock Canyon WSA plus an additional 160 acres would be withdrawn from mineral entry and leasing. As there is almost no potential for geothermal or oil and gas, there would be no impacts. The potential for development of an open pit mine would be lost.

Conclusion:

Development of potential mineral resources would be foregone. This would preclude development of a potential mine. This would be a moderate negative impact.

Impacts on Wildlife Facilities

All management facilities proposed for wildlife habitat and population management with the exception of two reservoirs would extend the use period for antelope on the upland benches into the late summer period on areas where water is the limiting factor. The reservoirs would slightly increase antelope populations by expanding the year long habitat.

Conclusion:

Two reservoirs would not be constructed. This would preclude a slight increase in antelope population levels in the WSA.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

All grazing facilities would be maintained as they are now. One new reservoir would be constructed in the Wall Canyon Allotment. Two seeding projects, 2,000 acres in the Nut Mountain Allotment and 1,300 acres in the Wall Canyon Allotment would not be constructed. Approximately 200 AUMs in each Allotment would not be available to maintain existing livestock levels while allowing rest periods on native upland ranges.

Conclusion:

There would be no impact to maintenance of livestock facilities. Approximately 200 AUMs of "flexibility" use in two allotments would be foregone. This would lead to moderately slower rates of range improvement on two grazing allotments.

Impacts on Watershed Management

Two watershed management structures would not be constructed. Peak flows in the High Rock and East Fork drainages would not be reduced and riparian revegetation would proceed at a moderately slower pace under entirely natural conditions.

Consequences

Conclusion:

Two control structures would not be constructed. Flow reduction would be foregone. Riparian improvement rates would be moderately reduced in the High Rock and East Fork drainages.

Impacts on Wild Horse and Burro Management

A trap site within the WSA would not be available for use, since the required drainage crossing maintenance would not be allowed under wilderness management. In order to gather horses in the WSA an alternate trap site outside the WSA would be used. This would result in moving horses further with an increase in stress related deaths and 25 percent higher costs for gathering due to longer drives at slower rates to minimize stress problems.

Conclusion:

One trap site within the WSA would not be used for horse gathering. Use of an alternate trap site would increase gathering costs by 25 percent and result in an increase in stress related death among the horses.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

42,140 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
13,180 Acres Non-wilderness
160 Acres Private Land to be Designated if Acquired

Under the Partial Wilderness Alternative 42,140 acres of the East Fork High Rock Canyon WSA would be designated wilderness. An additional 160 acres of private land would also be designated if acquired.

The primary impacts of this alternative relate to protection of wilderness values on the designated portion and loss of wilderness values on portions of the WSA impacted by mining, seedings, and horse gathering activities.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Under this alternative 42,300 acres of the East Fork High Rock Canyon WSA, including split estate and private lands, would be designated as wilderness. The wilderness values on 42,300 acres of wilderness would receive special legislative protection provided by designation. The areas naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation as well as outstanding scenic, wildlife and cultural resources would be protected by wilderness management.

Wilderness values on the remaining 13,180 acres would be subjected to the effects of multiple-use management including mineral resource development and recreational ORV use.

Naturalness

All of the activities discussed under naturalness for the Proposed Action would take place under the Partial Wilderness Alternative except for one watershed structure in the northeastern portion of the WSA. The only other difference between the two alternatives is that the one new reservoir in the northeastern portion of the WSA would be constructed in the designated portion. The remainder of the activities would occur in the portion of the WSA described for the Proposed Action. Naturalness would be reduced on approximately five acres less than discussed under the Proposed Action and the perception of naturalness would be reduced on approximately 40 acres less than discussed for the Proposed Action. In summary, impacts to naturalness from management actions under this alternative would be essentially the same as the Proposed Action. These actions would negligibly reduce the overall naturalness of the WSA, through small scale actions with localized impacts to naturalness and the perception of naturalness.

There would be a slight positive benefit to the perception of naturalness as a result of the closure of 42,140 acres and 11 miles of vehicle ways to recreational ORV use. The closure would result in the elimination of approximately 300 visitor use days annually. The closure would not appreciably impact naturalness because the ways would be maintained in approximately existing condition by the low frequency passage of vehicles associated with livestock facility maintenance.

Solitude

Again, because actions within the WSA would be almost the same as for the Proposed Action as discussed for naturalness, impacts would be virtually the same as the Proposed Action. One less watershed structure would result in approximately 10 less vehicle trips over a two week period. There would be approximately two additional vehicle trips per year in the designated portion more than for the Proposed Action. This difference would not measurably affect opportunities for solitude.

Closure of an additional 9,000 acres and 4½ miles of vehicle ways in this alternative would result in negligible improvement in opportunities for solitude over to the Proposed Action . Use levels for recreational ORV users under both alternatives would rise from 1,300 to 1,500 visitor use days annually.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

The activities which measurably affect opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation under the Partial Wilderness Alternative would be the same as discussed for the Proposed Action, namely a mine on the eastern portion of the WSA. Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would be lost on approximately 4,000 acres. This would be a negligible impact because the mine location would not be anticipated to receive much recreational use if mine development did not occur.

Special Features

All the identified special features associated with the wildlife, scenic and cultural values in High Rock and East Fork High Rock canyons would be protected by wilderness designation as well as existing planning decisions associated with the High Rock ACEC. Therefore wilderness designation would not significantly impact the special features.

On the non-designated portion of the WSA there are no identified special features.

Conclusion:

The 42,300 acres of the East Fork High Rock Canyon WSA designated as wilderness would receive long-term statutory protection. The area's naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would slightly improve due to elimination of 300 visitor days of recreational ORV use. The area's most spectacular scenic values, cultural resources and wildlife resources would be under wilderness management.

On the 13,180 acres not designated as wilderness, naturalness would be lost on approximately 3,650 acres due to development of two range seedings, a mine and small range, watershed and wildlife projects. On the remainder of the non-wilderness portion of the WSA there would be slight reductions in opportunities for solitude due to an increase of 300 visitor days of recreational ORV use. Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would be lost on 1,000 acres on the eastern portion of the WSA.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Wilderness designation would close 42,300 acres to recreational ORV use eliminating 300 visitor days per year. Approximately twenty-three miles of vehicle way would be closed to ORV use. Most of the visitor use occurs within one-half mile of the western boundary road and this area would not be designated as wilderness. Therefore, there would be a negligible impact to recreational ORV use areas as use levels would decrease by 300 use days per year over the long-term and the use is shifted to other public lands.

Conclusion:

Closure of twenty-three miles of way and 42,300 acres of recreational ORV use would eliminate 300 visitor days of recreational ORV use per year. The areas being closed currently receive very little ORV use and any use foregone would be picked up on adjacent public lands. Therefore, there would be no significant impacts on recreational ORV use.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

All lands within the 42,300 acres designated as wilderness would be withdrawn from mineral entry and leasing. Development of potential mineral resources would be foregone. This includes almost no potential for metallic minerals. It is assumed that no production sufficient to support commercial development would be foregone. Therefore, the impacts on mineral resource development would be negligible.

All of the 13,180 acres not designated as wilderness would remain open for mineral entry and leasing. All potential mineral resources would be open for development. Mineral exploration would be expected only on the eastern portion of the WSA where development of a mine would be expected in the long term. No oil and gas or geothermal leasing or exploration would be expected.

Conclusion:

There would be no significant impacts to mineral resource development. Development of potential resources on 42,300 acres would be foregone. However, no identified commercial resources exists on these lands. Potential mineral resources on 13,180 acres would be available for development.

Impacts on Wildlife Management Facilities

All management facilities proposed for wildlife habitat and population management with the exception of two reservoirs east of Pole Canyon would be developed. The two reservoirs could extend the use period for antelope on the upland benches into the late summer period on areas where water is the limiting factor. The reservoirs could slightly increase antelope populations by expanding the year long habitat.

Conclusion:

Two reservoirs would not be constructed. This would preclude a slight increase in antelope population levels in the WSA.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

All grazing facilities would be maintained as they are now. Two seeding areas totalling 3,300 acres (2,000 acres in Nut Mountain and 1,300 acres in Wall Canyon) would be developed, as well as one reservoir in the Wall Canyon Allotment. Therefore, there would be no impacts to grazing facility maintenance and construction.

Conclusion:

There would be no impacts to grazing facility maintenance and construction.

Impacts on Watershed Management

One of two proposed watershed control structures would be constructed in the non-wilderness portion of the WSA. The second structure would not be completed. Peak flows in the East Fork drainage would not be reduced and riparian vegetation improvement would proceed at a moderately slower rate than under natural processes.

Conclusion:

One of two watershed control structures would not be built. Riparian vegetation improvement in the East Fork drainage would proceed at moderately slower rate.

Impacts on Wild Horse and Burro Management

The trap site for gathering the horses which requires road grader maintenance of the drainage crossings prior to gathering operations would be in the non-wilderness portion of the WSA. Therefore, there would be no impacts to wild horse and burro management.

Conclusion:

There would be no impacts to wild horse and burro management.

NO WILDERNESS/NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

This alternative would designate none of the 55,320 acres of the East Fork High Rock Canyon WSA as wilderness.

The primary impacts of this alternative relates to how mineral development, development of range, water and wildlife facilities and wild horse management actions would affect wilderness values.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

None of the 55,320 acre WSA would be designated as wilderness, therefore, none of the wilderness values of naturalness, solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation would receive special statutory protection provided by designation. The primary impacts of this proposal relate to naturalness and solitude as affected by mineral resource development and recreational ORV use.

Naturalness

All of the activities discussed under naturalness for the Proposed Action would occur under this alternative. In addition to those activities two additional small reservoirs would be constructed in the center of the WSA to provide summer water for antelope and wild horses. The reservoirs would result in a surface disturbance of less than one acre each and reduce the perception of naturalness on 40 acres each. This would be a slight reduction of naturalness locally. Additional summer water in the center of the WSA would slightly improve overall naturalness by increasing

antelope populations within the summer and lower localized overgrazing of wild horses through better distribution patterns. Impacts to naturalness associated with management activities would not differ significantly from those discussed for the Proposed Action because with the exception of two reservoirs the actions would be the same.

Although none of the WSA would be designated as wilderness, existing land use plan decisions close the same vehicle ways to recreational ORV use that would be closed by wilderness designation under the Proposed Action. Thus in both alternatives approximately 15 miles of ways would be closed and recreational ORV use would decrease by 300 use days annually. Therefore, impacts to the perception of naturalness and naturalness from recreational ORV use would be the same as discussed for the Proposed Action.

Solitude

As discussed for naturalness, management actions and recreational ORV use would be the same for the No Wilderness Alternative and the Proposed Action with the exception of the two additional wildlife reservoirs in the center of the WSA. Construction of the reservoirs would require 3 vehicle trips over a one week period for each site and 2 additional vehicle trips every 15 years for major maintenance for each site. This impact on opportunities for solitude would be localized to the project site and access routes and would be negligible on solitude over the entire WSA. Opportunities for solitude would be slightly decreased over existing levels if the WSA were not designated as wilderness.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

The only activity which would measurably impact opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would be development of a mine on the eastern portion of the WSA. Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would be lost on approximately 1,000 acres in and around the mine. This would be localized impact and would be negligible because the mining location would not be anticipated to receive much recreational use if development did not occur.

Special Features

All of the identified special features associated with the wildlife, scenic and cultural resource values in High Rock Canyon and East Fork High Rock Canyon would be protected by existing land use plan decisions associated with the High Rock ACEC. Therefore there would no no significant impacts to the special features if the area were not designated as wilderness.

Conclusion:

Over the next 15 to 20 years the wilderness values of naturalness would be lost on approximately 3,650 acres of the 55,320 acre WSA. This would occur as a result of development of an open-pit mine (300 acres), two seedings (3,300 acres) and miscellaneous projects to support grazing, watershed, wildlife and wild horse management. On the remainder

of the WSA the wilderness values of opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be slightly reduced primarily because of increased levels of recreational ORV use. There would be no impacts to the identified special features.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

The High Rock ACEC Management Plan calls for closure of 15 miles of vehicle ways on 7,000 acres in the High Rock and Pole Canyon area. This would eliminate 300 visitor days of recreational ORV use. The portions of the WSA not affected by High Rock ACEC decisions would remain open to recreational ORV use. Over the long term, recreational ORV use would rise from approximately 1,000 to 1,300 visitor days annually.

Conclusion:

Recreational ORV use would be eliminated by 300 visitor days due to closure of 15 miles of way on 7,000 acres. Over the long-term an increase of 300 visitor use days is anticipated for the remainder of the WSA. Therefore, impacts to recreational ORV use would be negligible.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

The High Rock ACEC Management Plan withdraws 7,000 acres from mineral entry. All of the remaining 48,320 acres not withdrawn as part of the ACEC would remain open for mineral entry and leasing. All potential mineral resources would be open for development. Minerals exploration would be expected only on the eastern portion of the WSA, where development of a 300 acre mine for precious metals is expected. No oil and gas or geothermal leasing or exploration would be anticipated.

Conclusion:

There would be no impacts to mineral resource development. Potential mineral resources on all but 7,000 acres of the WSA would be available for development, and development of one mine would be anticipated.

Impacts on Wildlife Management Facilities

All of the management facilities proposed for wildlife would be constructed. Therefore, there would be no impacts on the development of wildlife management facilities.

Conclusion:

There would be no impacts on the development of wildlife management facilities.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

All grazing facilities would be maintained as they are now. Two seedings areas totalling 3,300 acres (2,000 acres in Nut Mountain and 1,300 acres in Wall Canyon) would be development as well as one reservoir in the Wall Canyon Allotment. Therefore, there would be no impacts to grazing facility maintenance and construction.

Conclusion:

There would be no impacts to grazing facility maintenance and construction.

Impacts on Watershed Management

The 2 proposed watershed control structures would be constructed in the WSA. Peak flows in the High Rock and East Fork drainages would be reduced and riparian revegetation would increase. Therefore, there would be no impacts to watershed management.

Conclusion:

There would be no impacts to watershed management.

Impacts on Wild Horse and Burro Management

The trap site for gathering horses which requires road grader maintenance of the drainage crossings prior to gathering operations would be available for use. Therefore, there would be no impacts to wild horse and burro management.

Conclusion:

There would be no impacts to wild horse and burro management.

SHELDON CONTIGUOUS
(CA-020-1012)

PROPOSED ACTION/PARTIAL WILDERNESS

780 Recommended for Wilderness Designation
23,350 Acres Non-wilderness

The Proposed Action would designate 780 acres of the Sheldon Contiguous WSA as wilderness if the adjacent WSA on the Sheldon Refuge is designated as wilderness. The remaining 23,350 acres of the WSA would remain non-wilderness.

The impacts of this alternative relate to long term impacts of range project maintenance and construction and recreational ORV use on wilderness values.

Consequences

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Under this alternative 780 acres of the WSA would be designated wilderness adjacent to the 26,000 acre Sheldon Refuge wilderness. The wilderness values would receive statutory protection. The only value which would potentially receive any benefits from wilderness designation would be naturalness since the size of the area by itself limits opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation.

On the 23,350 acres not designated as wilderness, the resources would be subjected to the effects of multiple-use management including reservoir construction and recreational ORV use.

Naturalness

On the 780 acres designated as wilderness there would no impacts to naturalness on the perception of naturalness because the area is topographically isolated from vehicle access and there are no existing or proposed projects.

Construction of 7 small reservoirs and 2½ miles of fence for livestock in the center of the WSA on the 23,350 acres not designated as wilderness would impair naturalness on less than 10 acres total and reduce the perception of naturalness on approximately 200 acres. Impacts on naturalness and the perception of naturalness from construction activities would be a slight negative impact due to the small number of the activities and the local- ized nature of the impacts.

Solitude

On the designated portion of the WSA there would be no impacts to solitude because there would be no activities which would influence opportunities for solitude.

On the non-wilderness portion opportunities for solitude on the southern and western portions of the WSA would decline slightly as recreational ORV use increases by 100 hunter days annually over the next 15 to 20 years. On the eastern portion of the WSA there would be negligible impacts to solitude because there would be no changes in recreational ORV use levels. The overall impacts on solitude would be negligible because of the low use levels and because most of the recreational ORV use would remain concentrated during hunting season when opportunities for solitude would be the lowest of the year.

Construction of 7 small reservoirs and 2½ miles of fence would disrupt solitude for a total of 3 weeks during construction. Opportunities for solitude would be reduced at the project site and along access routes in conjunction with the 30 vehicle trips. This would cause localized losses of solitude for short periods, but overall the impacts to solitude would be negligible. Maintenance of 7 reservoirs and 2½ miles of fence would continue. Maintenance activities associated with the proposed projects

would require 1 additional vehicle trip per year and 2 additional vehicle trips every 5 years associated with reservoir maintenance. The increased vehicle trips would have negligible impacts on solitude.

Prescribed burning of 60 acres of sagebrush next to the western boundary on a 25-year cycle would not affect solitude. Solitude on the project site is already significantly reduced by the existing low frequency traffic and dust on the State highway which forms the boundary.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

On the entire WSA there would be no activities which would significantly impact opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. The small scale projects would only impact primitive and unconfined recreational opportunities during actual construction or maintenance which would occur very rarely, and there are no features within the WSA which would concentrate visitor seeking primitive recreational opportunities.

Special Features

There are no identified special features.

Conclusion:

Designation would not affect naturalness, solitude or primitive recreation values on 780 acres. On the non-wilderness portion, the perceptive of naturalness would be slightly reduced on up to 200 acres, due to the construction of 7 livestock reservoirs and 2 miles of fence. Opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be slightly reduced due to continued presence of recreational ORVs.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Although 780 acres of the WSA would be officially closed to recreational ORV use the designated area has no vehicle access and no ORV use is occurring. None of he twenty-three miles of vehicle ways throughout the remaining 23,350 acres would be closed to vehicle use. Therefore, there would be no impacts to recreational ORV use.

Conclusion:

There would be no impacts to recreational ORV use.

Adverse Impacts Which Cannot Be Avoided

Construction of 7 reservoirs and 2 miles of fence could result in localized adverse impacts as a result of surface disturbance. However, since no sensitive sites would be affected and disturbance would occur on less than 10 acres throughout the entire WSA, potential impacts would be minimal.

Relationship Between Local Short-term Uses of Man's Environment and the Maintenance and Enhancement of Long Term Productivity

If the WSA is not designated wilderness, all present, short-term uses would continue. For the WSA there are many ongoing uses including hunting, livestock grazing and wildlife management (deer, antelope, sage grouse). Under the Proposed Action, almost all future development options will remain open and long-term productivity is not likely to be impacted. However, without wilderness designation, the possibility of activities (for example, increased mineral development) that could reduce long-term productivity is greater than under wilderness designation.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

Activities such as mining, mineral leasing and material sales, could create an irreversible commitment of the wilderness resource in part or all of a WSA, if it is not designated as wilderness. However, development is not anticipated now or in the foreseeable future. On the whole, however, no irreversible or irretrievable commitments of resources are anticipated.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

24,130 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
0 Acres Non-wilderness

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the entire 24,130 acres of public land in the Sheldon Contiguous WSA would be designated as wilderness. This would adjoin the administratively endorsed Sheldon Refuge WSA of 26,000.

The impacts of the alternative relate to protection of wilderness values and impacts on recreational ORV users.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The All Wilderness Alternative would result in all 24,130 acres of the WSA being protected by legislative mandate. Wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be protected by wilderness management. Opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be enhanced by the designation of the 26,000 acre WSA on the Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge as wilderness.

Naturalness

The closure of the entire WSA and 23 miles of vehicle ways to recreational ORV use would negligibly change the perception of naturalness on the eastern half of the WSA because there is almost no existing ORV activity. On the western half of the WSA, the closure would result in a slight increase in the perception of naturalness during deer and antelope hunting seasons due to the elimination of 400 visitor days per year of recreational ORV use. During the remainder of the year the closure would have no

impact on the perception of naturalness because there is currently very little ORV use. The benefits of closure would be partially offset by problems with illegal ORV use. The nature of the topography and vegetation, particularly in the northwestern portion of the WSA would make enforcement of closures impossible to enforce. Any barriers on existing ways at the boundary roads would easily be bypassed by hunters or fur trappers. Cross country travel on the Macy Flat lakebed would continue on approximately 4,000 acres.

All of the project development actions discussed for the Proposed Action would occur with wilderness designation under this alternative. The small scale, localized nature of the projects would result in negligible impacts to naturalness and the perception of naturalness.

Solitude

Closure of the entire WSA to recreational ORV use, and a loss of 400 visitor days per year of ORV use, would result in negligible impacts to opportunities for solitude with two exceptions. First, during the hunting season (August through November), opportunities for solitude would increase slightly due to the decrease in ORV based hunting activities. Second, the Macy Flat lakebed would continue to receive illegal ORV activities through most of the spring, summer and fall periods. Use levels during that period would not be anticipated to change appreciably from existing levels. Overall, opportunities for solitude would not appreciably improve over existing levels due to the low use levels and the concentration of use during several key weekends of the hunting season.

Construction and maintenance of the same range management facilities as discussed for the Proposed Action would have negligible impacts on solitude due to the small scale and localized nature of the impacts.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Over the entire WSA there would be no activities which would significantly impact opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. The small scale projects would only impact recreational opportunities for the brief periods of construction and maintenance. Closure of the entire WSA to recreational ORV use would slightly improve primitive and unconfined recreation during hunting season. However, for the non-hunter the WSA would hardly seem to be a good recreational site during hunting season. Designation of the entire WSA would double the area in which opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation could occur under wilderness management when the contiguous Sheldon WSA is considered. However, demand for primitive and unconfined recreational opportunities in the area is expected to remain low in the next 15 to 20 years.

Special Features

There are no identified special features within the WSA.

Conclusion:

All wilderness values would receive long term Congressional protection. Naturalness would be slightly decreased by range management facilities. Opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would be slightly increased during hunting season and negligibly affected the remainder of the year.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Wilderness designation would close the entire 24,130 acres to recreational ORV use. Twenty-three miles of ways would be closed. Recreational use of approximately 400 motorized visitor use days would be foregone annually. The major recreational use of the WSA is for hunting and almost all hunters use ORV's in the WSA. Although the loss of 400 use days is relatively small, the impact would be much larger to recreational ORV users. The southern half of the WSA, which receives the bulk of the recreational use, is adjacent to the Little Sheldon portion of the Refuge. The Little Sheldon is permanently closed to hunting and hunters actively hunt within the WSA in hopes of bagging a trophy deer or antelope that inadvertently "get lost" on the hunted area. Therefore, the impact to recreational ORV users of closing the area would be moderate.

Conclusion:

Closure of the WSA to recreational ORV users would eliminate 400 motorized visitor use days annually. This would have a moderate negative impact to recreational ORV use.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

12,470 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
11,660 Acres Non-wilderness

The Partial Wilderness Alternative would designate 12,470 acres of the Sheldon Contiguous WSA as wilderness. This would adjoin one corner of the administratively endorsed Sheldon Refuge WSA.

The impacts of this alternative relate to long term impacts of range projects and ORV use on wilderness values.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

This alternative would designate 12,470 acres of the WSA as wilderness. The wilderness values on the designated portion include naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation. Opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be slightly enhanced if the adjacent 26,000 acre Sheldon Refuge WSA was also designated as wilderness.

The 11,660 acres of the WSA not designated as wilderness would be subjected to multiple-use management activities including reservoir construction and recreational ORV use.

Naturalness

On the 12,470 acres of the WSA designated as wilderness, closure of 10 miles of infrequently used ways would have almost no impact on the perception of naturalness because illegal ORV activity would continue almost at existing levels on the Macy Flat lakebed and because the remainder of the non-wilderness portion currently receives almost no ORV use at all.

All of the project developments identified for the Proposed Action would also be completed under this alternative. The only difference would be that all of the fence and five of the reservoirs would be constructed in the designated portion of the WSA. The rest of the reservoirs would be in the non-wilderness portion. Due to the small scale and localized impacts, there would be only negligible impacts to naturalness on both the designated and non-designated portion of the WSA.

On the 11,660 acres of the WSA not designated as wilderness increases of approximately 100 visitor use days of recreational ORV use associated primarily with hunting would slightly decrease the perception of naturalness during a portion of each year. During the remainder of the year the impacts on the perception of naturalness would be negligible.

Solitude

Closure of approximately half the WSA and 10 miles of way would negligibly impact solitude because of illegal ORV use on Macy Flat and because there is almost no recreational ORV use on the remainder of the designated portion.

On the non-designated portion, opportunities for solitude would decrease slightly during hunting season due to 100 additional motorized visitor use days annually. During the remainder of the year there would be no impacts on solitude because the very low use levels would not change.

Development of the projects as outlined for the Proposed Action would negligibly impact solitude because project construction and maintenance activities would occupy such short time frames on localized areas.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

The small scale of the project development and the concentration of recreational ORV use to the short hunting season would insure the primitive and unconfined recreational opportunities within the WSA would not significantly change in the designated or non-designated portions of the WSA.

Special Features

There are no identified special features within the WSA.

Conclusion:

Wilderness values on approximately half of the WSA would receive long term protection. Naturalness would be slightly decreased by range facility projects Opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would be slightly improved.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Although approximately half of the WSA and 10 miles of vehicle ways would be closed to recreational ORV use, the majority of recreational use occurs and would continue to occur on the non-wilderness portion of the WSA. Motorized use levels would be expected to increase by 100 visitor days to approximately 500 visitor days annually. Any use foregone on the designated portion would be absorbed on the non-wilderness portion or outside the WSA. Therefore, there will be negligible impacts on recreational ORV use.

Conclusion:

All the demand for recreational ORV use within the WSA can be accommodated on the non-wilderness portion or other public lands, therefore, there would be negligible impacts on recreational ORV use.

NO WILDERNESS/NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

0 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
24,130 Acres Non-wilderness

None of the 24,130 acres in the Sheldon Contiguous WSA would be designated as wilderness.

The impacts of the alternative relate to long term impacts to wilderness values.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The entire 24,130 acre WSA would not be designated as wilderness and none of the wilderness values of naturalness, solitude and primitive recreation would be protected by legislative action. The primary impacts of the proposal relate to naturalness and solitude values and how they would be affected by reservoir construction and ORV use.

Naturalness

An increase of 100 visitor days annually of recreational ORV use would slightly decrease the perception of naturalness on the southwestern portion of the WSA during hunting season. During the remainder of the year there would be no impacts to the perception of naturalness due to

continued low levels of recreational use. On the remainder of the WSA the perception of naturalness would not change because recreational use levels would not change.

Construction of 7 reservoirs and 2¼ miles of fence as detailed under the Proposed Action would result in a slight overall reduction of naturalness. The scattered nature of the projects and the small, localized scale would ensure the naturalness would be only slightly impacted.

Solitude

The increase of 100 visitor days annually as detailed under naturalness would result in a slight reduction for solitude during hunting season and virtually no impacts on solitude for the remainder of the year. Overall this would result in a negligible impact on opportunities for solitude.

Maintenance activities associated with the new projects of 1 vehicle trip annually and 2 additional vehicle trips every 5 years for reservoir maintenance would negligibly reduce solitude below existing levels due to the limited scope of the activities and the scattered project locations.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Opportunities for primitive an unconfined recreation would be negligibly impacted if the WSA were not designated wilderness. The low level of project development and the small level of increases in recreational ORV use would ensure that primitive and unconfined recreational opportunities would remain basically unchanged from existing levels.

Special Features

There are no identified special features within the WSA.

Conclusion:

The wilderness values of naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be negligibly reduced on 24,130 acres by project development for range and continued ORV use.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

The entire WSA would remain open to recreational ORV use. Over the long term use would increase from approximately 400 visitor days to a total of 500 visitor days annually.

Conclusion:

Recreational ORV use is expected to slowly increase over the long term by 100 visitor days to 500 visitor days annually. There would be no impacts on recreational ORV use.

MASSACRE RIM
(CA-020-1013)

PROPOSED ACTION (PARTIAL WILDERNESS)

23,260 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
86,740 Acres Non-wilderness

The Proposed Action for the Massacre Rim WSA would designate 23,260 acres as wilderness and 86,740 acres non-wilderness. A 48,730 acre ACEC would be designated on the non-wilderness portion of the WSA.

The primary impacts of the Proposed Action relate to the impacts of minerals development, range management facilities and ORV use on the wilderness values on the non-designated portion and benefits to wilderness values on the designated portion.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Under the Proposed Action 23,260 acres of the Massacre Rim WSA would be designated as wilderness. The wilderness values on the designated portion would receive special protection provided by wilderness management. The area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation, as well as outstanding cultural resource and wildlife values would be protected by wilderness management.

On the 86,740 acres of the WSA that are not designated as wilderness 48,730 acres would be designated as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) to protect the identified special values associated with cultural resources and wildlife. The remaining 38,010 acres would be subjected to the effects of multiple-use management including mineral resource development and recreational ORV use.

Naturalness

There would be negligible benefits to the perception of naturalness from the closure of 26,260 acres and 6 miles of vehicle ways. The closure would result in virtually no reduction in recreational ORV use because access to the ways is restricted by locked gates on private lands along the eastern edge of the WSA.

In the designated portion of the WSA, construction of 6 small reservoirs would impair naturalness on approximately 6 acres and reduce the perception of naturalness on approximately 240 acres. Impacts to naturalness and the perception of naturalness from construction activities would not be significant due to the widely scattered project locations and the localized nature of the impacts.

Gathering of wild horses from both the designated and non-designated portions of the WSA would slightly improve naturalness by reducing the potential for over grazing.

On the 86,260 acres not designated as wilderness, 900 visitor days per year of ORV use on 33 miles of way would maintain approximately 40 acres in the southern and western portions of the WSA in a non-natural condition. Naturalness and the perception of naturalness would not change over the next 15 to 20 years as recreational ORV use levels increase by 200 use days per year because the existing ways would be used.

Construction of a number of widely scattered small projects to support existing livestock grazing use including 13 reservoirs, 1½ miles of fence and 8 spring developments would impair naturalness on approximately 25 acres and reduce the perception of naturalness on approximately 700 acres. Development of the 700 acre seeding along the southern boundary would impair naturalness on the 700 acres. The perception of naturalness would not be significantly impacted as seedings rapidly regain enough brush cover so that most users do not recognize that the vegetation has been manipulated by human actions. Impacts to naturalness and the perception of naturalness from construction activities would be moderately negative due to the large number of projects in the non-designated portion.

Reintroduction of bighorn sheep along the western boundary would slightly improve naturalness because of the reestablishment of a native species into historic habitat.

On the non-wilderness portion of the WSA the large scale archaeological excavations at nine widely scattered sites would slightly reduce naturalness at each site on less than ½ acre per site for a few years following the excavations. After several years the sites would become naturally revegetated and would appear natural in character. Due to the short time frame and localized nature of the project the impact to naturalness and the perception of naturalness would be negligible. Placement of two interpretive signs in the southern portion of the WSA would have virtually no impact to naturalness and would reduce the perception of naturalness on five acres. This would also be a localized negligible impact to naturalness.

Harvest of 100 cords of juniper firewood yearly from the western portion of the WSA would result in a surface disturbance of approximately 10 acres per year. Due to the concentrated cutting area the perception of naturalness would be lost on approximately 4,000 acres in the juniper forest. Completion of limb pile burning and some broadcast prescribed burning on approximately 1,000 acres in clearings in the juniper zone would partially offset the impacts to the perception of the naturalness by removing woodcutting debris and creating visual diversity. Overall, naturalness in the woodcutting area would be retained, but the perception of naturalness would be degraded.

Construction of a powerline along 1½ miles of the western boundary would impair naturalness on approximately 50 acres due to the actual presence of the powerline. The perception of naturalness would only be minimally impacted because the new powerline would parallel an existing powerline which forms a portion of the western boundary.

Consequences

Naturalness would be lost on approximately 300 acres near the northern edge of the WSA due to development of an open pit mine. Although the actual mining activities would last for 3 to 5 years, the limited reclamation would not restore the area to natural conditions. The perception of naturalness would be lost on approximately 700 acres surrounding the mining operations.

Total impacts to naturalness over the next 15 to 20 years include approximately 1,250 acres of surface disturbance of which all but 6 acres would be in non-wilderness portion. The perception of naturalness would be impaired on approximately 5,000 acres. Overall the impacts on naturalness and the perception of naturalness on the designated portion would be slight. On the non-wilderness portion impacts on naturalness and the perception of naturalness would be locally significant particularly near the southern, western and northern boundaries where large scale activities would occur. Within the central portion of the WSA the activities would be small scale and widely scattered which would result in only mineral impacts to naturalness.

Solitude

Opportunities for solitude would negligibly improve on 26,260 acres in the designated portion of the WSA because recreational ORV use is currently restricted by lack of public access through private lands.

Construction of 6 new reservoirs on the designated portion of the WSA would disrupt solitude for a period of 2 days on each site. Construction would require 4 vehicle trips at each site. Opportunities for solitude would be locally reduced at the project site and along access routes while construction is in progress. Maintenance of the new reservoirs would slightly reduce opportunities for solitude below existing levels. Maintenance activities would require 1 vehicle trip annually and every 15 to 20 years each reservoir would require an additional 2 trips with heavy equipment. Due to the small number of trips and the localized nature of the impacts this would not be a significant impact.

On the 86,740 not designated as wilderness, opportunities for solitude would slowly decline over the next 15 to 20 years as visitor use would increase by 200 visitor use days annually. Due to the dispersed nature of the recreational use in the WSA, the impact on solitude would be negligible.

Construction of 13 new reservoirs, eight spring developments and 1½ miles of new fence would disrupt solitude for a total of 3 months during construction. Opportunities for solitude would decline at the project site and along access routes. Due to the limited number of access points into the WSA solitude would be significantly decreased for one summer/fall period when the construction occurs. Development of a 700 acre seeding adjacent to the southern boundary would disrupt solitude for two separate two week periods while herbicides are applied and seed is applied. This would temporarily disrupt solitude during development. However, the impacts would be slight because of the proximity to the State highway along the southern boundary. Long term impacts to opportunities for

solitude would be negligible due to the one time nature of project construction. Maintenance of the existing projects including 21 reservoirs, 52 miles of fence, 7 windmills and 4 spring developments would continue with 20 vehicle trips per year and 10 vehicle trips every 5 years. Maintenance of the proposed projects, including 13 reservoirs, 1¼ miles of fence and 8 spring developments would require 1 additional vehicle trip per year and 6 additional vehicle trips every 5 years for major maintenance. The additional vehicle activities would negligibly reduce solitude below existing levels. Retreatment of 4,500 acres of seedings and spray fields with aerial applications of herbicides would continue. During the retreatment period of 3 weeks every 15 to 20 years, solitude would be disrupted on approximately 8,000 acres by low flying aircraft. The overall impacts to solitude would be slight due to the localized nature of maintenance activities and the cyclic nature of the major maintenance actions.

Gathering of wild horses every 3 to 4 years would locally reduce solitude when the gathering operations are conducted and when horses are removed from two non-wilderness trap sites with large trucks. This would be negligible impact on solitude due to the short time frame and localized operation.

Large scale archaeological excavations on 9 widely scattered sites would disrupt opportunities for solitude during one summer. Excavations would require a base camp and 15 workers who would shuttle to the sites each day in at least three vehicles. Solitude would be impacted at the sites and along access routes. This would result in a moderate reduction in solitude locally and a negligible reduction overall because this would be a one time activity.

Harvest of 100 cords of juniper firewood in the western portion of the non-wilderness portion would result in significant vehicle activity and chain saw noise on approximately 4,000 acres during late summer and early fall. During the cutting period there would be 100 vehicle trips with most confined to weekends. During the use period opportunities for solitude would be foregone.

Construction of a powerline along 1¼ miles of the western boundary would reduce opportunities for solitude on approximately 500 acres during the 6-month construction period. Due to the localized project location the one time activity would have negligible impacts on solitude.

Solitude on approximately 1,000 acres at the northern end of the WSA would be foregone while an open pit mining operation is conducted. This activity would last for an estimated 3 to 5 years after which there would be no impacts to solitude.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

On the 26,260 acres designated as wilderness opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation associated with hiking, horseback riding and wildlife observation would not measurably change from existing levels. The lack of existing use by recreational ORVs and and the relatively few new projects would ensure that there would be no impacts to primitive and unconfined recreational opportunities.

Consequences

In the non-wilderenss portion of the WSA development an open pit mine, new project development for reservoirs seedings, springs, a powerline, fencing and continued maintenance and woodcutting would locally reduce opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. Most of the large scale actions would occur near the southern, western and northern edges of the WSA which would leave the center of the WSA with only small scale localized impacts to primitive and unconfined recreation.

Special Features

On the designated portion of the WSA, the identified wildlife values would receive little additional benefits from wilderness designation. The major impacts to wildlife, primarily sage grouse and antelope, are related to livestock grazing which would not appreciably change with wilderness designation. therefore, there would be no significant impacts to the wildlife.

On the non-wilderness portion of the WSA, the wildlife values and the high quality cultural resources would be managed under an ACEC plan which would limit certain kinds of management actions which might affect the special features. However, certain activities, such as minerals activity could negatively impact wildlife or cultural values. No minerals activity is foreseen in the ACEC area. Therefore, the identified special features of wildlife and cultural resources would benefit by ACEC designation.

Conclusion:

The 23,260 acres of the Massacre Rim WSA designated as wilderness would receive long-term statutory protection. The area's naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would only slightly improve due to restrictions on ORV use. The area's scenic and wildlife values would be preserved under wilderness management.

On the 86,740 acres of non-wilderness, naturalness would be lost on approximately 1250 acres due to development of a seeding, an open pit mine, continuing fuelwood harvest and a series of small projects for range management. Most of the disturbance would occur at the edges of the WSA. On the remaining core of non-wilderness, there would be slight reductions in opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation due to an increase in recreational ORV use.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Wilderness designation would close 23,260 acres of the WSA to recreational ORV use. This would result in a vehicle way closure of approximately six miles. The designated portion has a past history of low ORV use due to topography and restrictions on access through private lands. Therefore, ORV use on the designated portion would be negligibly impacted with any displaced use being picked up on the remainder of the WSA on other public lands.

Conclusion:

Closure of six miles of vehicle ways and 23,260 acres to ORV use would have negligible impacts on recreational ORV use. Approximately 100 visitor days of recreational ORV use would be absorbed on surrounding public lands.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

All lands within the 23,260 acres designated as wilderness would be withdrawn from mineral entry and leasing. However there is almost no potential for oil and gas or geothermal and low potential for metallic minerals in this portion of the WSA. It is assumed that no production sufficient to support commercial development would be foregone. Therefore, the impacts on mineral resource development would be negligible.

All of the 86,740 acres not designated as wilderness would remain open for mineral entry and leasing. All potential mineral resources would be open for development. Minerals exploration would be expected only on the northern portion of the WSA where development of a mine would be expected in the long-term. No oil and gas or geothermal leasing or exploration would be expected.

Conclusion:

Impacts on mineral resource development within the 23,260 acres designated wilderness would be negligible since no commercial production would be foregone. There would be no impacts on the remaining 86,740 acres since they would be available for mineral resource development.

Impacts on Fuelwood Cutting

The Little Basin juniper forest would be reopened to fuelwood harvest. Therefore, there would be no impacts on fuelwood cutting.

Conclusion:

There would be no impacts on fuelwood cutting.

Impacts on Archaeological Excavations

All areas identified in the Massacre Lakes CRMP for ground disturbing excavations would be in the non-wilderness portion of the WSA. Therefore, there would be no impacts on archaeological excavations.

Conclusion:

There would be no impacts on archaeological excavations.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

All grazing facilities would be maintained as they are now. One seeding of 700 acres would be developed, as well as the 19 reservoirs, 8 spring developments and 1¼ miles of fence. Therefore, there would be no impacts on grazing facility maintenance and construction.

Conclusion:

There would be no impacts on grazing facility maintenance and construction.

Adverse Impacts Which Cannot Be Avoided

Mineral development activities, the construction of 13 reservoirs, 1¼ miles of fence, 8 spring developments and continued wood harvest would result in some localized adverse impacts as a result of surface disturbance. However, since no sensitive species or habitats have been identified and disturbance would only occur on 500 acres throughout the WSA, potential impacts would be minimal.

Relationship Between Local Short-term Uses of Man's Environment and the Maintenance and Enhancement of Long Term Productivity

If the WSA is not designated wilderness, all present, short-term uses would continue. For the WSA there are many ongoing uses including hunting, livestock grazing and wildlife management (deer, antelope, sage grouse), and potentially, mining exploration and development. Under the Proposed Action, almost all future development options will remain open and long-term productivity is not likely to be impacted. However, without wilderness designation, the possibility of activities (for example, increased mineral development) that could reduce long-term productivity is greater than under wilderness designation.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

Mineral resource development could create an irreversible commitment of the wilderness resource in part or all of a WSA, if it is not designated as wilderness. In the event mineral development does occur, an estimated 300 acres of the WSA would be disturbed. On the whole, however, no irreversible or irretrievable commitments of resources are anticipated.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

110,000 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
0 Acres Non-wilderness

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the entire 110,000 acres of public land in the Massacre Rim WSA would be designated as wilderness.

The primary impacts under the alternative relate to protection of wilderness values and the elimination of recreational ORV use, minerals development and fuelwood harvest.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The All Wilderness Alternative would protect 110,000 acres under wilderness management. Wilderness values of naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would be protected. Additionally, the supplemental values of diverse topography and vegetation, visual quality, wildlife and cultural resources would be protected by special wilderness management.

Naturalness

The closure of the entire WSA to recreational ORV use, including the elimination of 750 motorized visitor days, would negligibly enhance the perception of naturalness on the western two-thirds of the WSA. However, the nature of the topography and vegetation would make enforcement of closures impossible. Any barriers on existing ways or roads could easily be bypassed by hunters, trappers or rockhounds. Cross country travel over portions much of the Massacre Bench is relatively common and would continue to occur as visitors avoid long walks over open terrain to retrieve big game rockhound and check traplines. This illegal activity would not allow increases in the perception of naturalness or perhaps a third of the WSA.

Construction of a number of widely scattered small projects to support existing livestock grazing use including 19 reservoirs, 1½ miles of fence and 8 spring developments would impair naturalness on approximately 30 acres and reduce the perception of naturalness on approximately 1,000 acres. Maintenance of three separate vegetation treatment areas in the southern portion of the WSA totalling 4,500 acres on a 15 to 20 year cycle with prescribed burning would maintain unnatural features within the WSA. Impacts to naturalness perception from construction and maintenance activities would be moderately negative due to the large number of projects.

Reintroduction of bighorn sheep along the western boundary would slightly improve naturalness because of the reestablishment of a native species into historic habitat.

Gathering of wild horses from the WSA would slightly improve naturalness by reducing the potential for over grazing.

Archaeological excavations of 7 sites for a total of 10 one square yard test pits would negligibly impact naturalness due to the small localized impacts and because the pits would be backfilled immediately after excavations.

Construction of a powerline along 1½ miles of the western boundary would impair naturalness on approximately 50 acres due to the actual presence of the powerline. The perception of naturalness would only be minimally impacted because the new powerline would parallel an existing powerline which forms a portion of the western boundary.

The powerline would be constructed in an existing right-of-way.

Consequences

Total impacts to naturalness over the next 15 to 20 years includes approximately 100 acres of surface disturbance. The perception of naturalness would be lost on approximately 600 acres. The impacts to naturalness would be a slight negative impact because although there would be a large number of projects, they are widely scattered and the impacts of each would be localized.

Solitude

Opportunities for solitude would slightly improve due to the elimination of 750 visitor days annually of recreational ORV use. Substantial increases in opportunities for solitude would not be realized due to the continued presence of illegal ORV activities as discussed under naturalness.

Construction of 19 new reservoirs, 8 spring developments and 1½ miles of new fence would disrupt solitude for a total of 3 months during construction. Opportunities for solitude would decline at the project site and along access routes. Due to the limited number of access points into the WSA solitude would be significantly degraded for one summer/fall period when the construction occurs. Long term impacts to opportunities for solitude would be negligible due to the one time nature of project construction. Livestock maintenance activities would continue with 21 vehicle trips annually, plus 16 vehicle trips every 5 years for cyclic maintenance of reservoirs. The new projects would require 1 additional annual trip and 7 additional vehicle trips every 5 years for reservoir maintenance. The additional trips would negligibly reduce solitude below the existing levels. Use of prescribed burning to remove sagebrush on 4,500 acres of existing seeding on a 25 year cycle would disrupt solitude on approximately 8,000 acres during the burning. The overall impacts to solitude would be slight due to the nature of the maintenance activities and the one time cyclic nature of the major maintenance activities.

Gathering of wild horses every 3 to 4 years would locally reduce solitude when the gathering operations are conducted and when horses are removed from two trap sites with large trucks. The impact would be localized and negligible overall due to the short time frame.

The small scale archaeological excavations on seven sites would involve no vehicle trips and two man-days per site. Therefore there would be no impact to opportunities for solitude.

Construction of a powerline along 1½ miles of the western boundary would reduce opportunities for solitude on approximately 500 acres during the six month construction period. Due to the localized project location the one time activity would have negligible impacts on solitude.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would not appreciably change from existing levels. Although the WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use, illegal ORV use on the western and southern portion of the WSA and increases in vehicle trips associated with project maintenance and

construction would offset the closure. Therefore, any benefits to opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would be negligible from wilderness designation.

Special Features

Wilderness designation would provide some additional protection to the identified wildlife and cultural resource values in the center of the WSA. On the southern portion of the WSA significant archaeological sites would continue to be with easy walking distance of the boundary road and subject to continuing illegal collection and vandalism.

Conclusion:

All wilderness values would receive long term protection. Opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would only be negligibly enhanced due to continued illegal ORV use and vehicle use associated with range projects. Naturalness would locally be reduced by new range management facilities. The special features associated with wildlife and cultural resources would be slightly better protected than if the area was not designated wilderness.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Wilderness designation would close the entire 110,000 acre Massacre Rim WSA to all forms of recreational ORV use. Motorized visitor use days would drop from approximately 750 visitor days annually. Public lands near the WSA offer similar opportunities for recreational ORV use would be absorbed on surrounding public lands.

Conclusion:

Recreational ORV use would be foregone on 110,000 acres with an estimated 750 motorized visitor use days foregone annually. The impacts of shifting the use to other public lands would be negligible.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

All lands within the Massacre Rim WSA would be withdrawn from mineral entry and leasing. Development of potential mineral resources would be foregone. This includes high potential for the development on an open pit mine and almost no potential for geothermal or oil and gas.

Conclusion:

Development of potential mineral resources would be foregone. This would preclude development of a 300 acre mining operation for precious metals.

Impacts on Fuelwood Cutting

The Little Basin juniper forest would remain closed to fuelwood harvest. An annual harvest of approximately 100 cords would be foregone. Although

juniper would be available outside the WSA to replace the Little Basin harvest, the alternate sources do not have the ease of access and quality of trees that are found within the WSA. An estimated twenty-five users would be affected by precluding fuelwood cutting.

Conclusion:

Fuelwood harvest of 100 cords per year would be foregone creating a slight impact on 25 local users.

Impacts on Archaeological Excavations

Excavations would be limited to ten units by BLM archaeologists. Excavations by other professional archaeologists would be foregone. This would result in very limited data retrieval from significant archaeological sites on the Massacre Bench. The excavations would have been the logical culmination of many years of inventory, mapping and interpretation of cultural resources significant on a regional basis. Although the Massacre Bench is not the only area in the region that this information could be obtained, it is the only area for which the existing studies have progressed as far as they have. Failure to continue the archaeological work to the logical end through excavations would lessen the potential value of existing information and result in significant costs on another area in the region to achieve the same result.

Conclusion:

Large scale excavations by professional archaeologists would be foregone. This would result in significant adverse impacts on the study and interpretation of regional cultural resources.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

All structural grazing facilities would be maintained as they are now. The vegetative treatment areas would be maintained through the use of prescription burning instead of the preferred retreatment with herbicides. This would require waiting longer between retreatments to allow brush densities to increase to levels that would carry a fire. A 700 acre seeding would be foregone. The seeding's 150 AUMs of additional forage are needed to provide livestock grazing rest periods on native range within the Nut Mountain Allotment, while maintaining existing livestock use levels. The remainder of the proposed projects would be developed.

Conclusion:

There would be no impacts on structural grazing facility maintenance and construction. Use of prescribed burning at longer intervals than herbicides to treat vegetative treatment areas would reduce available forage for five years when the treatments need maintenance. Approximately 150 AUMs of forage needed for use in the Nut Mountain Allotment would not be available.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE A

91,170 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
18,830 Acres Non-wilderness

The Partial Wilderness Alternative A would result in the designation of 91,170 acres as wilderness and 18,830 acres non-wilderness.

The primary impacts of this alternative relate to the protection of wilderness and the loss of wilderness values on portions of the WSA affected by mining, ORV use, grazing facilities and woodcutting.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Under Partial Wilderness Alternative A, 91,170 acres of the Massacre Rim WSA would be designated as wilderness. The designated portion would receive special wilderness protective management as provided by legislation. The area's naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, as well as the supplemental features of diverse topography and vegetation, visual quality, wildlife and cultural resources would be protected by special wilderness management.

The 18,830 acres of non-wilderness would be subjected to the effects of multiple-use management including mineral resource development, woodcutting, powerline construction and recreational ORV use.

Naturalness

All of the activities discussed under naturalness for the Proposed Action would take place under this alternative except that wilderness designation would limit archaeological excavations to 10 one square yard test pits on 7 separate sites. The only other difference between this alternative and the Proposed Action would be how the projects would be distributed between the designated and the non-wilderness portions of the WSA. For this alternative, only three reservoirs, the 1¼ miles of fencing and the 700 acre seeding would be developed in the non-wilderness portion. All other livestock facility activities would occur in the designated portion of the WSA. Activities associated with minerals, woodcutting, and powerline construction would occur in the non-designated portion of the WSA. Impacts to naturalness and the perception of naturalness form management actions associated with everything except recreational ORV use would be as discussed for the Proposed Action. These impacts would slightly reduce overall naturalness due to the large number of small and large projects. Large scale activities such as mining, woodcutting and seeding development would locally cause significant negative impacts on naturalness.

On the portion of the WSA designated as wilderness there would be slight benefits to the perception of naturalness due to closure of the area to recreational ORV use and the elimination of 400 use days annually of motorized use. However, this impact would be negligible because much of the designated area receives no existing ORV traffic and the remainder would continue to receive illegal ORV use and authorized vehicle use associated with livestock facility maintenance and construction.

Consequences

On the portion of the WSA not designated as wilderness, the perception of naturalness would be expected to slightly increase due to a decrease from 350 to 300 motorized visitor days per year because the non-designated portion has little to attract visitors.

Solitude

Again, because actions within the WSA would be almost the same as for the Proposed Action, impacts associated with projects would be virtually the same as the Proposed Action. The only difference between the two alternatives with respect to solitude is that more solitude disrupting activities associated with projects would occur on the designated portion. In fact almost all of the small scale construction activities would take place in the designated portion, while all of the large scale actions would take place in the non-wilderness portion. Due to the large size of the designated portion of the WSA, the additional disruptions would not appreciably reduce the overall opportunities for solitude. On the non-designated portion, opportunities for solitude would be rare due to mining, woodcutting and the proximity of the boundary to the non-wilderness portion of the WSA.

Closure of 15 miles of vehicle ways would eliminate recreational ORV use of 400 visitor days per year on the designated portion of the WSA. The decrease would be partially offset by illegal ORV use due to the inability to control trespass and continued vehicle access for construction and maintenance of livestock related facilities. Therefore opportunities for solitude would only slightly improve over existing levels.

On the portion of the WSA not designated as wilderness recreational ORV use would also decline by 50 visitor use days per year because visitor use into the center of the WSA (the designated portion) would decline and most use on the non-wilderness portion is made while traveling into the center of the WSA. Therefore, opportunities for solitude would be expected to slightly increase over the next 15 to 20 years.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

The activities which measurably affect opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation under this alternative would be the same as those discussed for the Proposed Action. The only expectations would be related to the decrease in recreational ORV use on a much longer area than expected under the Proposed Action. The major impacts to primitive and unconfined recreational opportunities, namely a mine and woodcutting activities would be the same as the Proposed Action, therefore, opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would be significantly reduced on the northern, western and northern portion of the WSA. On the remainder of the WSA, opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would be locally reduced by numerous small scale projects.

Special Features

Wilderness designation would provide some additional protection for the identified wildlife and cultural resource values as described for the All Wilderness Alternative because all of the identified special features would be in the designated portion of the WSA.

Conclusion:

The 91,170 acres of the Massacre Rim WSA designated as wilderness would receive long-term statutory protection. The area's naturalness, and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would slightly improve due to restrictions on ORV use. The area's scenic and wildlife values and most of the cultural resource values would be preserved under wilderness management.

On the 18,830 acres of non-wilderness, naturalness would be lost on approximately 1250 acres due to development of a seeding, a mine, continuing fuelwood harvest and a series of small projects for range management. Most of the disturbance would occur at the edges of the WSA. On the remaining core of non-wilderness, there would be slight improvement in opportunities for solitude due to a decrease in recreational ORV use.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Wilderness designation would close 91,170 acres and 15 miles of way to ORV use. This would eliminate recreational ORV use of 400 visitor days per year. On the non-wilderness portion, 18,830 acres would remain open to ORV use however, this use is expected to decrease by 50 visitor days due to use foregone that is associated with the wilderness portion of the WSA. The non-wilderness portion is primarily vegetative treatment areas and the juniper forest in Little Basin. These areas are not quality hunting areas, and are used by visitors on the way to the Massacre Bench. Total recreational ORV visitor use in the WSA would be expected to decline from 750 to 300 use days annually. Similar opportunities for recreational ORV use are common near the WSA and any use foregone would easily be absorbed on areas outside the WSA. Therefore, there would be no significant impacts on recreational ORV use.

Conclusion:

Recreational ORV use in the WSA would decrease by 450 visitor use days annually. The use foregone would be absorbed on nearby public lands. Therefore, the impacts to recreational ORV use would be negligible.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

All lands within the 91,170 acres designated as wilderness would be withdrawn from mineral entry and leasing. Development of potential mineral resources would be foregone. This includes almost no potential for oil and gas or geothermal and low potential for metallic minerals. It is assumed that no production sufficient to support commercial development would be foregone. Therefore, the impacts on mineral resource development would be negligible.

All of the 18,830 acres not designated as wilderness would remain open for mineral entry and leasing. All potential mineral resources would be open for development. Minerals exploration would be expected only on the

northern portion of the WSA where development of a mine would be expected in the long-term. No oil and gas or geothermal leasing or exploration would be expected.

Conclusion:

There would be no significant impacts. Development of potential resources on 91,170 acres would be foregone. However, no identified commercial resources exists on these lands. Potential mineral resources on 18,830 acres would be available for development.

Impacts on Fuelwood Cutting

The Little Basin juniper forest would be reopened to fuelwood harvest. Therefore, there would be no impacts on fuelwood cutting.

Conclusion:

There would be no impacts on fuelwood cutting.

Impacts on Archaeological Excavations

Excavations would be limited to ten units by BLM archaeologists. Excavations by other professional archaeologists would be foregone. This would result in very limited data retrieval from significant archaeological sites on the Massacre Bench. The excavations would have been the logical culmination of many years of inventory, mapping and interpretation of cultural resources significant on a regional basis. Although the Massacre Bench is not the only area in the region that this information could be obtained, it is the only area for which the existing studies have progressed as far as they have. Failure to continue the archaeological work to the logical end through excavations would lessen the potential value of existing information and result in significant costs on another area in the region to achieve the same result.

Conclusion:

Large scale excavations by professional archaeologists would be foregone. This would result in significant negative impacts on the study and interpretation of regional cultural resources.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

All grazing facilities would be maintained as they are now. One seeding of 700 acres would be developed, as well as the 19 reservoirs, 8 spring developments and 1½ miles of fence. Therefore, there would be no impacts on grazing facility maintenance and construction.

Conclusion:

There would be no impacts on grazing facility maintenance and construction.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE B

61,240 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
48,760 Acres Non-wilderness

The Partial Wilderness Alternative B would result in the designation of 61,240 acres as wilderness and 48,760 acres non-wilderness.

The primary impacts of this alternative relate to the protection of wilderness and the loss of wilderness values on portions of the WSA affected by mining, ORV use, grazing facilities and woodcutting.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Under Partial Wilderness Alternative B, 61,240 acres of the Massacre Rim WSA would be designated as wilderness. The designated portion would receive special wilderness protective management as provided by legislation. The area's naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, as well as the supplemental features of diverse topography and vegetation, visual quality, wildlife and cultural resources would be protected by special wilderness management.

On the portion of the WSA not designated as wilderness, 48,760 acres would be subjected to the effects of multiple-use management including mineral resource development, woodcutting, powerline construction and recreational ORV use.

Naturalness

All of the activities dussed under naturalness for the Proposed Action would take place under this alternative except that wilderness designation would limit archaeological excavations to 5 one square yard test pits on 6 separate sites in the designated portion and 35 one square yard test pits on 3 sites in the non-wilderness portion of the WSA. The only other difference between this alternative and the Proposed Action would be how the projects would be distributed between the designated and the non-wilderness portions of the WSA. Proposed projects in the designated portion includes 12 reservoirs and 6 spring developments. All other projects would be constructed in the non-wilderness portion of the WSA. For maintenance activities all of the vegetative treatment projects, all of the windmills and about half of the springs, fencing and reservoirs would be in the non-wilderness portion of the WSA. Activities associated with minerals, woodcutting and powerline construction would occur in the non-designated portion of the WSA. Summarizing impacts to naturalness and the perception of naturalness from management actions associated with everything except recreational ORV use would be as discussed for the Proposed Action. These impacts would slightly reduce overall naturalness due to the large number of small and large projects. Large scale activities such as mining, woodcutting and seeding development would locally cause significant negative impacts on naturalness.

On the portion of the WSA designated as wilderness, 250 visitor days per year of recreational ORV use would be eliminated. This would result in a slight benefit to the perception of naturalness. This would be because

the designated portion receives almost no recreational ORV use, except during hunting season, due to rough terrain and restrictions on access across private lands.

On the portion of the WSA not designated as wilderness, the perception of naturalness would be expected to slowly decrease as recreational ORV use increases from 500 to 650 visitor days per year over the long term. This would not be a significant impact on the perception of naturalness. Naturalness would not significantly change because the vehicle ways would be maintained by the infrequent passage on recreational and other vehicles.

Solitude

Again, because actions within the WSA would be almost the same as for the Proposed, impacts associated with projects would be virtually the same as the Proposed Action. The only difference between the two alternative with respect to solitude is that the level of cultural resource excavations would be about half discussed for the Proposed Action. The discussion for naturalness provides the breakdown of in which portion of the WSA (designated or non-designated) the activities occur. The major activities which affect solitude, mining and woodcutting would be confined to the non-wilderness portion, therefore any significant reductions in opportunities for solitude would be confined to the non-wilderness portion of the WSA.

Closure of 8 miles of vehicle way would negligibly impact solitude because the designated portion of the WSA receives low recreational ORV use levels because of the terrain and the locked gates.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

The activities which measurably affect opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation under this alternative would be the same as those discussed for the Proposed Action. The only expections would be related to the slight decrease in recreational ORV use on a larger area than expected under the Proposed Action. The major impacts to primitive and unconfined recreational opportunities, namely a mine and woodcutting activities would be the same as the Proposed Action, therefore, opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would be significantly reduced on the northern, western and northern portion of the WSA. On the remainder of the WSA, opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would be locally reduced by numerous small scale projects.

Special Features

Wilderness designation would provide some additional protection for the identified wildlife and cultural resource values as described for the All Wilderness Alternative because half of the identified special features would be in the designated portion of the WSA.

Conclusion:

The 61,240 acres of the Massacre Rim WSA designated as wilderness would receive long-term statutory protection. The area's naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation

would slightly improve due to restrictions on ORV use. The area's scenic and wildlife values would be preserved under wilderness management.

On the 48,760 acres of non-wilderness, naturalness would be lost on approximately 1250 acres due to development of a seeding, a mine, continuing fuelwood harvest and a series of small projects for range management. Most of the disturbance would occur at the edges of the WSA. On the remaining core of non-wilderness, there would be slight reductions in opportunities for solitude due to an increase in recreational ORV use.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

Wilderness designation would close 61,240 acres of the WSA to recreational ORV use. This would result in a vehicle way closure of approximately eight miles and elimination of 250 visitor days. The designated portion has a past history of only limited ORV use due to topography and restrictions on access through private lands. Therefore, ORV use on the designated portion would be negligibly impacted with any displaced use being picked up on the remainder of the WSA on other public lands.

Conclusion:

Closure of eight miles of vehicle ways and 61,240 acres to ORV use would have negligible impacts on recreational ORV use. Designation would displace approximately 250 visitor days per year of recreational ORV use to other public lands.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

All lands within the 61,240 acres designated as wilderness would be withdrawn from mineral entry and leasing. Development of potential mineral resources would be foregone. This includes almost no potential for oil and gas or geothermal and low potential for metallic minerals. It is assumed that no production sufficient to support commercial development would be foregone. Therefore, the impacts on mineral resource development would be negligible.

All of the 48,760 acres not designated as wilderness would remain open for mineral entry and leasing. All potential mineral resources would be open for development. Minerals exploration would be expected only on the northern portion of the WSA, where development of a mine would be expected in the long term. No oil and gas or geothermal leasing or exploration would be expected.

Conclusion:

There would be no impacts to mineral resource development. Development of potential resources on 61,240 acres would be foregone. However, no identified commercial resources exists on these lands. Potential mineral resources on 48,760 acres would be available for development.

Impacts on Fuelwood Cutting

The Little Basin juniper forest would be opened to fuelwood harvest. Therefore, there would be no impacts on fuelwood cutting.

Conclusion:

There would be no impacts on fuelwood cutting.

Impacts on Archaeological Excavations

Excavations would be limited to approximately half the sites identified in the Massacre Lakes CRMP. This would result in partial data retrieval from significant archaeological sites on the Massacre Bench. The excavations would be the logical culmination of many years of inventory, mapping and interpretation of cultural resources significant on a regional basis. Although the Massacre Bench is not the only area in the region that this information could be obtained, it is the only area for which the existing studies have progressed as far as they have. Completion of a portion of the archaeological excavations would yield data about part of the bench, but information about activities at the higher elevations on the bench would be foregone. This would leave an incomplete picture of the past human activities in the area.

Conclusion:

Large scale excavations by professional archaeologists would be partially completed. The activities precluded by wilderness designation would moderately reduce the completeness of the study and interpretation of regional cultural resource values.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

All grazing facilities would be maintained as they are now. One seeding of 700 acres would be developed, as well as the 19 reservoirs, 8 spring developments and 1¼ miles of fence. Therefore, there would be no impacts on grazing facility maintenance and construction.

Conclusion:

There would be no impacts on grazing facility maintenance and construction.

NO WILDERNESS/NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

0 Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation
110,000 Acres Non-wilderness

None of the Massacre Rim WSA would be designated as wilderness.

The primary impacts of the alternative relate to how mineral development, development of range facilities, ORV use and fuelwood harvest would affect wilderness values.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

None of the 110,000 acre WSA would be designated as wilderness, therefore, none of the wilderness values of naturalness, solitude or primitive recreation would receive special statutory protection provided by designation. The primary impacts of this proposal relate to the impacts on naturalness and solitude from mineral development, wood harvest, range projects and recreational ORV use.

Naturalness

All of the activities discussed under naturalness from the Proposed Action would occur under this alternative. Therefore, impacts to naturalness over the next 15 to 20 years would include 6,500 acres of surface disturbance and most of the perception of naturalness on approximately 5,000 acres. Overall the impacts on naturalness and the perception of naturalness would be slight. Locally negative impacts to naturalness and the perception of naturalness would be significant particularly near the southern, western and northern boundaries.

The entire WSA would remain open to recreational ORV use. Long term increases of 200 visitor days annually would be expected to occur. The perception of naturalness in the vicinity of 39 miles of vehicle way would not be expected to change with the increase in ORV use due to the low use levels and the screening provided by junipers over most of the WSA.

Solitude

As discussed for naturalness, management actions would be the same for the No Wilderness Alternative and the Proposed Action. Therefore impacts would be the same.

The additional 200 visitor days of recreational ORV use would sightly decrease opportunities for solitude below existing levels in the vicinity of the access routes. Overall this impact would be negligible because of the large areas which would not receive any increases in visitor use levels.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

The only activities which would measurably reduce opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation from existing levels would be development of a mine on 300 acres at the northern edge of the WSA. Other development activities including powerline construction, woodcutting and small scale range facility development would locally reduce opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. Overall, reductions in primitive and unconfined recreation would be slight because there are no features within the WSA which would attract visitors, therefore the use would be so widely dispersed that visitors would not readily encounter disruptive features.

Special Features

None of the identified special features associated with wildlife or cultural resources would receive additional special protection. However, the Massacre Lake Cultural Resources Management Plan addresses protection of cultural resources and the planned Massacre Rim Wildlife Habitat Management Plan would address the wildlife. There are no projected activities which would result in significant new adverse impacts to these resources. Therefore, without wilderness designation it would not be anticipated that there would be any significant impacts to the wildlife or cultural resource values.

Conclusion:

Over the next 15 to 20 years the wilderness values of naturalness would be lost on approximately 1,250 acres of the 100,000 acre WSA. This would occur as a result of development of one mine (300 acres), a seeding (700 acres) and miscellaneous projects to support grazing. On the remainder of the WSA the wilderness values of opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be slightly reduced primarily because of a 200 visitor day increase of recreational ORV use.

Impacts on Recreational ORV Use

The entire WSA would remain open to recreational ORV use. Over the long-term, recreational ORV use is expected to increase from 750 to 950 visitor days annually.

Conclusion:

Recreational ORV use would increase by 200 visitor days over the long-term. Therefore, there would be no impacts to recreational ORV use.

Impacts on Mineral Resource Development

All of the area, except for 1,600 acres withdrawn in the cultural resources plan, would be open for mineral entry and exploration. All potential mineral resources would be open for development. Minerals exploration would be expected only on the northern portion of the WSA, where development of a mine would occur. No oil and gas or geothermal leasing or exploration would be anticipated.

Conclusion:

There would be no impacts on mineral resource development. Potential mineral resources on all but 1,600 acres of the WSA would be available for development.

Impacts on Fuelwood Cutting

The Little Basin juniper forest would be opened to fuelwood harvest. Therefore, there would be no impacts on fuelwood cutting.

Conclusion:

There would be no impacts on fuelwood cutting.

Impacts on Archaeological Excavations

All the excavations anticipated under the Massacre Lakes CRMP would be completed. Therefore, there would be no impacts on archaeological excavations.

Conclusion:

There would be no impacts on archaeological excavations.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

All grazing facilities would be maintained as they are now. One seeding of 700 acres would be developed, as well as the 19 reservoirs, 8 spring developments and 1½ miles of fence. Therefore, there would be no impacts on grazing facility maintenance and construction.

Conclusion:

There would be no impacts on grazing facility maintenance and construction.

CUMULATIVE ANALYSIS FOR IMPACTS ON THE TRANS SIERRA UTILITY CORRIDOR

Since the study corridors under consideration in the Trans Sierra Utility corridor study are dependent on alignments that include portions of one or more of the six souther WSAs included in this FEIS, a cumulative analysis based on the Proposed Actions for these WSAs was performed. The impacts of the individual proposals and alternatives have previously been identified for each WSA.

The utility corridors shown on Map 1-2 (p. 6) where identified by the Sierra Pacific Power Company as study corridors in which to route potential high voltage powerlines to provide an east-west link from the Great Basin to California, and the north-south link of existing lines through Gerlack, Nevada to the Reno area. Three of the five potential routes were identified as having a higher priority. These include the northern most east-west corridor located north of the Buffalo Hills WSA; the east-west corridor running south of the Twin Peaks WSA and between the Five Springs WSA and Dry Valley Rim WSA; and the north-south corridor on the east side of the Dry Valley Rim WSA.

The Proposed Actions for these WSAs would not preclude development of any of the three study corridors that are considered to be higher priority. The two remaining corridors would not be available for development under the Proposed Action. However, since the Sierra Pacific Power Company has identified these as the lower priority routes under consideration it is not likely they would be utilized in the foreseeable future given the higher priority study corridors could be developed.

Consequences

The All Wilderness Alternatives for these WSAs, if all of the WSAs were recommended suitable for wilderness designation, would preclude development of the high voltage transmission line within the WSAs. Should all the affected WSAs be designated wilderness, development of the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor would have to be relocated outside the WSA.

Conclusion:

Development of the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor utilizing any of the three higher priority study corridors could occur under the Proposed Actions, and would only be precluded by an All Wilderness recommendation for the six southern WSAs.

Chapter 5

Consultation & Coordination

CHAPTER 5

CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION WITH OTHERS

OVERVIEW OF THE PROCESS

Consultation and Coordination with the public and other agencies was a planned and integral part of the development of the alternatives analyzed in this Final EIS.

This has been a continuing process starting with the wilderness inventory of BLM lands in 1978.

Following is a summary of the consultation, coordination, and public participation in the EIS process.

- Notice of Intent to prepare the Eagle Lake/Cedarville Wilderness Study/EIS published in the Federal Register on September 9, 1983 and filed with the California and Nevada State Clearinghouses.

- On September 13, 1983, we sent a scoping letter requesting issue identification and interest in receiving future mailings about the Eagle Lake/Cedarville Wilderness Study/EIS to 387 individuals, groups and agencies. We received 36 replies.

- Notice of Availability for the planning criteria for the Eagle Lake/Cedarville Wilderness Study/EIS published in the Federal Register on January 27, 1984. We received 21 requests for the planning criteria.

- The District Advisory Council (DAC) suggested in October of 1983 that a Technical Review Team be formed to provide quality input to the BLM prior to development of the preferred alternative and Draft EIS. (See "Technical Review Team Process" p. 40 in the Introduction to this document.)

- District Advisory Council approves TRT recommendation and passes on the recommendation to the District Manager June 30, 1984.

- Update's outline progress to date on the Eagle Lake/Cedarville Wilderness Study EIS process were mailed to up to 372 individuals and organizations during April, June, and August 1984,.

Oral as well as written comments received throughout the planning process were used in the development of alternatives analyzed in this Final EIS. These comments are on file and available for public review in the BLM Susanville District Office.

In addition to the consultation and coordination done through the mailings associated with the Eagle Lake Cedarville Wilderness EIS, there were several meetings held with interested organizations to discuss the EIS.

A public meeting was held prior to the Eagle Lake Technical Review Team's (TRT) field trip and in the evenings during both the Eagle Lake and Cedarville TRT field trips for any interested people or organizations to talk to the TRT members about their concerns about any of the WSAs.

The Eagle Lake Technical Review Team was given a presentation by representatives of the Sierra Army Depot prior to the TRTs formulation of a recommended proposed action. The presentation was about Sierra Army Depot's activities on lands adjacent to the Skedaddle and Dry Valley Rim WSAs.

The Susanville District Staff presented a briefing for the Nevada State Clearinghouse Agencies at the beginning of the 90 day public comment period on the Draft EIS. The briefing discussed the selection of the proposed action as listed in the Draft EIS and the environmental consequences of the proposed action and other alternatives. The California Clearinghouse was asked if they would like a briefing. They declined, saying that it would not be necessary for their review of the Draft EIS.

There has been an extensive consultation and coordination process between the BLM and the U.S. Army concerning the operation of the Sierra Army Depot. Activities at the Depot presently focus on the demolition of ordnance with future operations planned to also include training of U.S.A.F. crews in the loading of ordnance on military aircraft beginning in 1987. The Sierra Army Depot boundary is within one mile of the Skedaddle Mountains WSA and the demolition site within 2¼ miles of the WSA. The Dry Valley Rim WSA is located 2 miles from the Depot. The BLM recognizes the needs and rights of the Army on the Sierra Army Depot, and proposes partial wilderness for both the Skedaddle Mountains and Dry Valley Rim WSAs with the understanding that the military activities would continue and possibly expand.

Lassen County officials also expressed concern regarding the potential affects of wilderness designation on the operations of the Sierra Army Depot. These concerns focused primarily on the potential economic impacts of the Depot which is one of the County's largest employers. Public safety was also addressed by the County which has an identified Public Safety Zone around portions of the Depot.

The BLM Wilderness Management Policy does not provide for the BLM regulation of activities on adjacent Federal land managed by another Federal jurisdiction. The Wilderness Management Policy also states, "the fact that non-wilderness activities or uses can be seen or heard from areas within the wilderness shall not, of itself, preclude such activities or uses up to the boundary of the wilderness area." As a result of this consultation and coordination, the Proposed Actions recommended as non-suitable portions of the Skedaddle Mountains WSA that are within the Lassen County Public Safety Zone. Portions of the Dry Valley Rim WSA were recommended as unsuitable due to impacts associated with lingering dust clouds caused by activities at the demolition site.

The California BLM State Director will recommend in the Wilderness Study Report (WSR) that will accompany this FEIS to Congress, that prior to wilderness designation of the BLM lands, the Congress review the situation concerning the location of the Sierra Army Depot and be aware of the U.S. Army's need to continue and possibly expand their operations within the Depot.

Consultation and coordination on Threatened and Endangered Species was achieved by comparing the resource data on species occurring in WSAs against Fish and Wildlife Service and California Native Plant Society's'published list of Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive species. The Nevada Department of Wildlife and the California Department of Fish and Game were represented on the Technical Review Team. The coordination also included sending the Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Native Plant Society copies of the Draft EIS. Additionally, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has commented that Section 7 consultation need not be initiated in response to wilderness recommendations. However, formal consultation should be initiated prior to on the ground implementation of activities which may affect threatened or endangered species. (See Appendix for correspondence between the BLM and FWS).

Consultation and coordination with the California and Nevada Historic Preservation Officers was achieved by having them appoint an archaeologist to the Technical Review Teams. Coordination was completed by sending them the Draft EIS to review through the state clearinghouses.

Consultation and coordination with the Trans-Sierra Intertie Utility Corridor Group was achieved by having a representative of Sierra Pacific Power make a presentation to the Technical Review Teams and attend subsequent meetings including the District Advisory Council Meetings and the Public Hearings.

After the close of the public comment period, Lassen County Officials consulted with Susanville BLM on a potential situation to determine if it would be impacted by wilderness designation or not. They are concerned about the possibility of Nevada pumping groundwater out of the Honey Lake Basin to provide water to Reno. The Lassen County Officials are asking the California Department of Water Resources to do a study of the groundwater in the Honey Lake Basin. As part of the study they want to know if detention reservoirs on streams emptying into the basin would be feasible to help rechange the groundwater. Also, in what locations would it be feasible to construct the reservoirs. Lassen County Officials theorized that Skedaddle Creek and Willow Creek might be possible sites. If they are found to be feasible locations they could require a dam or reservoir in a WSA. Willow Creek is a perennial stream that runs through the lower end of Tunnison Mountain WSA. It was explained to the County that as it was not known whether such a plan was even feasible, or where any potentially feasible reservoir locations might be, we did not have any way of analyzing the impacts at this time. At such times as their studies were completed the information could be made available to Congress.

Comments received on the Draft EIS are addressed in this Final EIS.

The District Manager made a recommendation as to which WSA's or parts of WSA's are suitable or unsuitable for designation as wilderness. The recommendation has been reviewed and approved by the State Director.

RESULTS OF THE PUBLIC HEARING

A public hearing announcement was published in the Federal Register on March 29, 1985. Written notification of the hearings and information on the study were sent to Governors George Deukmejian of California and Richard Bryant of Nevada; U.S. Senators Paul Laxalt, Chic Hecht, Pete Wilson and Alan Cranston; U.S. Representatives Barbara Vucanovich and Norman Shumway; 2 members of the California State Legislature and 2 members of the Nevada State Legislature; 17 Federal agencies and departments; 9 California State officials and agencies; 10 Nevada State officials and agencies; 13 local officials and agencies; and numerous individuals and organizations.

The hearings were held in California at Cedarville and Susanville and in Nevada at Reno on April 30, 1985, and May 1 and 2, 1985, respectively. Twenty three people presented oral testimony at the hearings and additional comments were submitted by mail to the Susanville District Manager of the Bureau of Land Management.

1. The Public Hearings

The hearing officer was Jack Seley, Chief of Planning and Environmental Coordination Staff, Nevada BLM State Office, Reno, Nevada. The BLM was represented by C. Rex Cleary, District Manager, Susanville District, and five other BLM employees.

Twenty three people testified at the hearings. Of these, eleven expressed some support for the BLM's preferred alternative six, with portions of nine WSA's suitable totaling 237,550 acres. While supporting the preferred alternative, nine of the eleven indicated they would have liked a portion of a tenth WSA totaling 28,000 acres also recommended as suitable, plus larger suitable acreages on three of the other areas. Seven people indicated they would prefer less wilderness either by objecting to an individual WSA or just generally less area recommended as suitable. Two people indicated that they would generally prefer more area recommended as suitable than the BLM's alternative six. Two people indicated they did not want any area recommended as suitable for wilderness and one person stated they were not taking a final position at the hearing but would do so in writing before the public comment period ends.

The following spoke on behalf of organizations supporting the BLM proposal with the request for additional suitable acreage in four of the thirteen WSA's: Marjorie Lattka, Eagle Lake Chapter of the Audubon Society; Marjorie Sill, Toiyabe Chapter of the Sierra Club; Charles Watson, Nevada Outdoor Recreation Association. The following spoke on behalf of organizations and one state agency requesting generically less suitable acreage than the BLM proposal; Scott McDaniel, Nevada Department of Minerals; Scott Maas, Lassen Motorcycle Club; Tony Vigil, Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 6356; Carl Wikstrom, Gold Prospectors Association of America. The following spoke on behalf of organizations who had not taken a position as yet: Steve Evans, California Wilderness Coalition. The following spoke as individuals in support of the

BLM proposal: Wesley Cook, Douglas Miller. The following spoke as individuals in support of the BLM proposal plus additional suitable acreage in four of the thirteen WSA's: Robert Woods, Curtis Spaulding, Stan Weidert, Carl Schwarzenberg, Terry Woodin, Roger Scholl and Larry Dwyer. The following spoke as individuals who indicated that generally they would have wanted more acres recommended suitable than the BLM proposal: Ron Lunder, Greg Ebner. The following spoke as individuals who indicated that generally they would have wanted less acres recommended suitable than the BLM proposal: Ed Hollingsworth, Marvin Mattson. The following spoke as individuals who wanted no areas recommended as suitable: Val Simpson, Loren Burnette.

2. Comments From Elected Officials

Three letters were received from elected officials. One took no position on recommended areas, but indicated California State Senator John Doolittle was interested in the study and wanted to be kept informed. One response from Nevada County Supervisor, Joel Gustafson, stated that he approved of BLM's preferred alternative. A letter from the Lassen County Board of Supervisors indicated they would like less wilderness than in the BLM recommendation for they felt there might be an economic impact on the county due to the effect of wilderness on Sierra Army Depot, hunting and ranching.

3. Comments From State Departments and Agencies

Six comments were received from State of California or Nevada departments or agencies. Of these, two took no position, three indicated some support for the BLM's recommendation and one indicated a preference for less acreage than BLM recommended as suitable.

Communications from the following state agencies took no position: California Department of Water Resources and Nevada Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology.

Communications from two state clearing houses (Nevada State Office of Community Services and California Office of Planning and Research), and the Nevada Division of State Parks indicated support for the BLM's recommendation.

A letter from the Nevada Department of Minerals stated they would prefer the BLM recommend less acreage as suitable so that more area would be available for mineral exploration and development.

4. Comments From Federal Officials, Departments and Agencies

Six letters were received from Federal agencies. Of these, five took no position, while one wanted a no wilderness recommendation on two of the thirteen WSA's.

Letters received from the following Federal agencies took no position on the BLM's recommendation: Bureau of Reclamation, National Park Service-Western Region, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Geological Survey and Environmental Protection Agency.

A response from the Sierra Army Depot stated that they would prefer a no wilderness recommendation on the Skedaddle and Dry Valley Rim WSA's as they felt that wilderness would some day effect the operations of their nearby demolition area or other future operations on the Depot.

5. Comments From Organizations

Letters were received from twenty seven organizations. Three completely supported the BLM's recommendations, seven indicated some support for the BLM's recommendation, but indicated they would also like to have more acreage in seven of the thirteen WSA's. Five organizations stated they wanted more acreage recommended suitable without specifying another alternative. Five organizations wrote saying that they supported the all wilderness alternative. One company indicated it would like to see less acreage recommended suitable without specifying another alternative. One organization wanted the no wilderness alternative on one of the WSA's. One letter took no position on an alternative or acreage recommendation.

Organizations supporting the BLM's proposed alternative were: Sierra Pacific Power Company, Sierra Club Mother Lode Chapter, and the California Association of 4 Wheel Drive Clubs.

Organizations indicating some support for the BLM proposed alternative, but also stating that they would like to see more suitable acreage in seven of the thirteen WSA's were: Friends of Plumas Wilderness, Eagle Lake Audubon Society, Placer County Conservation Task Force, Natural Resources Defense Council, Sierra Club-National BLM Wilderness Chairman, Northeastern Californians for Wilderness, and Sierra Club-California/Nevada Representative.

Organizations indicating they wanted more acreage recommended suitable than the BLM's proposed alternative without specifying another alternative were: Wilderness Society California/Nevada Region, Nevada Outdoor Recreation Association, American Wilderness Alliance's first letter, California Native Plant Society, and Conservation Call.

Organizations who wrote in support of the all wilderness alternative are: Sierra Club Redwood Chapter, American Wilderness Alliance-second letter, Defenders of Wildlife, California Wilderness Coalition and Friends of the Earth.

Organizations who wrote in support of less acreage recommended suitable than the BLM proposed without specifying another alternative was the Ferret Exploration Company.

Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 6356 wrote to say that they preferred the no wilderness alternative for Skedaddle WSA CA-020-612.

A second letter from the Wilderness Society California/Nevada Region dealt with the use of sights and sounds and took no position on alternatives or acreage recommendations.

6. Comments From Citizens

Three hundred thirty six comments, including letters and post cards were received from citizens. Twenty three concurred with the BLM's proposed recommendations. Two hundred forty said that they supported the BLM's proposed recommendations but would have liked additional acreage on seven of the thirteen WSA's. Thirty eight responses said they wanted more acreage than the BLM's proposal recommended as suitable. One person said they supported Alternative II, the Resource Conflict Resolution Alternative. Twenty seven people supported the All Wilderness Alternative I. Three people indicated they preferred less acreage recommended suitable than the BLM proposed. One person supported the No Wilderness Alternative V. Three people commented on various aspects of the document without expressing an opinion on alternatives or acreage recommendations.

7. Summary and Analysis

Of the total 401 written and oral comments received for the record, 32 totally supported the BLM's proposed recommendations, 256 indicated they could support the BLM's proposed recommendation but would have liked to see more acreage recommended on seven of the thirteen WSA's, 47 favored wilderness designation of more acreage than the BLM proposal, 32 wanted the all wilderness alternative selected, 15 responses indicated they would prefer less wilderness either by objecting to an individual WSA or just generally less area recommended as suitable, 6 responses indicated they supported no wilderness for either one WSA or all of the WSA's, 13 responses commented on some portion of the EIS but took no position on a recommendation.

Those people who completely supported the BLM proposal most often stated that they felt the proposal was a good balance between the preservation of areas for wilderness values and the availability of other areas for non wilderness uses. They mentioned that the Technical Review Team Process which was used to develop this alternative resulted in a good compromise between competing resource needs. They felt that the best areas representing wilderness in the sagebrush steppe ecosystem within the Susanville District were being preserved and that the other areas not recommended would be best left for non wilderness uses.

There was a large group of responses that said they could support the BLM proposal but they would have liked a portion of the Wall Canyon WSA recommended as suitable and more acreage recommended suitable in the High Rock Canyon, Yellow Rock, East Fork High Rock Canyon, Little High Rock Canyon, Massacre Rim and Skedaddle WSA's. Reasons given were that as the Technical Review Team could not come to consensus on Wall Canyon, and the BLM should have recommended portion of the WSA without any resource or manageability conflicts as suitable. They felt that the Massacre Rim, Skedaddle and various High Rock Canyon units were of such high quality as wilderness that additional acreage should be preserved.

Those favoring more wilderness acres than in the BLM proposal did not give reasons specific to individual WSA's. They stated that it is important to preserve as much wilderness as we can at this time so the opportunity is not lost due to future activities that could change the character of the WSA's. The two points most often mentioned by people that wanted more wilderness was

that they disagreed with BLM on the analysis of manageability and outside sights and sounds. Some responses also said they felt that any WSA area that did not have resource or manageability conflicts should be recommended suitable without attempting to make any further analysis on how much area is appropriate to preserve based on comparative quality of the WSA areas.

Those favoring the all wilderness alternative most often said that as we cannot make more wilderness, we should preserve the maximum amount now before any more is lost. One respondent said that it is too early in the process to make concessions.

Those who wanted less wilderness or no wilderness believe that the area is best utilized for non wilderness uses and will not change much from what it is now, even without wilderness designation. Some responses mentioned the need to leave as much area open to mineral exploration and development as possible, as the nation will need these resources. Another common reason is that people felt the best recreational use of the area is by the use of motorized vehicles. A couple of responses did not feel that the Skedaddle WSA should be wilderness as that would constrain the existing and potential uses of the adjacent Sierra Army Depot. Another comment was that the BLM would have a very difficult time in trying to manage the amount of wilderness in the recommended alternative.

CONSISTENCY WITH OTHER PLANS

The areas covered by this EIS are very remote and usually outside of any other agencies areas of interest that have specific plans written on them.

Lassen County's General Plan and Washoe County's Comprehensive Regional Plan both have broad policy recommendations that are consistent with Wilderness Designation.

One of the goals of the Lassen County General Plan is: "Protection and appropriate use of the County's natural beauty and wilderness character".

Lassen County's General Plan shows the area in which the WSAs are located as "Grazing and Sagebrush Environment". One of the policy recommendations under this type of area are: "The Grazing and Sagebrush Environment is the logical area in the County for intensive recreational use involving relatively few people and requiring large amounts of open space".

The Washoe County Comprehensive Regional Plan states in the Cultural and Scenic Resources part of the Conservation Element: "Support the efforts of the Bureau of Land Management to review and, when in the best interest of the region's residents, officially designate wilderness areas".

Representatives of the Nevada Department of Wildlife and the California Department of Fish and Game were included in the Technical Review Teams that reviewed our EIS rough draft and helped draft the proposed action. No inconsistencies with any state wildlife plans such as the East Lassen Deer Herd Management Plan were identified.

The only other plans applicable to the area covered by the WSAs are Bureau of Land Management Plans such as Allotment Management Plans, Habitat Management Plans or Wild Horse Management Area Plans. These plans are either compatible with the WSAs or take into account any restrictions due to WSA status.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE DRAFT EIS

In addition to interested individuals and businesses, the following agencies and interest groups were requested to comment on the Draft EIS. Those who commented are indicated by an asterisk(*).

Elected Officials

Federal:
- Senator Paul Laxalt
- Senator Chic Hecht
- Senator Alan Cranston
- Senator Pete Wilson
- Representative Barbara Vucanovich
- Representative Norman Shumway

State:
- Senator Norm Glaser (Nevada)
- Senator Ray Johnson (California)*
- Senator John Doolittle (California)
- Assemblyman John Marvel (Nevada)
- Assemblyman Stan Statham (California)

Local:
- Washoe County Commission
- Lassen County Board of Supervisors*
- Humboldt County Commission
- Modoc County Board of Supervisors

Federal Agencies

Department of Agriculture:
- U. S. Forest Service - Lassen National Forest, Modoc National Forest
- U. S. Soil Conservation Service
- U. S. Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service

Department of Defense:
- Sierra Army Depot*
- U.S. Air Force*

Department of Energy - Washington D.C. *

Department of the Interior:
- U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs - Washington D.C.*
- U.S. Bureau of Land Management - Winnemucca District
- U.S. Bureau of Mines - Washington D.C.
- U.S. Bureau of Reclamation - Mid Pacific Regional Office, Sacramento*
  - Washington D.C.
- U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service - Sheldon Antelope Refuge,
  - Division of Ecological Services, Sacramento*
  - Washington D.C.
- U. S. Geological Survey - Washington D.C.*

Consultation and Coordination

National Park Service - Lassen National Park
- Western Regional Office, San Francisco*
- Washington D.C.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency - San Francisco, California*

Department of Transportation - Washington D.C.*

Federal Aviation Administration - Washington D.C.*

State Agencies, Commissions or Boards

Nevada:
- Air National Guard
- Community Services*
- Department of Minerals*
- Department of Wildlife
- Department of Transportation
- State Parks*
- Department of Agriculture
- State Lands Division
- State Historic Preservation Officer*
- Executive Chamber of Governor's Office*

California:
- State Clearinghouse
- The Resources Agency*
- Division of Mines and Geology*
- Department of Parks and Recreation*
- Lahonton Water Quality Control Board
- State Lands Commission*
- Department of Fish and Game*
- Department of Conservation
- Office of Planning and Research*
- State Historic Preservation Officer
- Native American Heritage Commission
- Department of Water Resources*

County Agencies
- Lassen County Planning Department
- Humboldt County Planning Department
- Washoe Council of Governments Regional Planning Commission
- Lassen County Chamber of Commerce
- Washoe County Parks

Organizations

Government:
- California County Supervisors Association
- North Cal-Nev. RC&D

Environmental:

Sierra Club - National Office*
- Shasta Group*
- Toiyabe Chapter*
- Redwood Chapter*
- Mother Lode Chapter*

Natural Resources Defense Council*
Wild Horse Organized Assistance (WHOA)
The Wilderness Society*
California Native Plant Society*
NE California for Wilderness*
California Wilderness Coalition*
California Wildlife Federation
Nevada Wildlife Federation
Defenders of Wildlife*
Audubon Society*
Plumas Wilderness Friends*
Friends of Eagle Lake

Cultural:

California Cultural Heritage Foundation
Nevada Museum

Livestock:

Lassen County Cattleman's Association
Modoc County Cattleman's Association
California Farm Bureau Federation
Range Improvement Association
Nevada Cattleman's Association
California Cattleman's Association
Nevada Farm Bureau

Mineral-Energy

Minerals Exploration Coalition
Reno Gems and Minerals
Nevada Prospectors Association*
Modoc Gem and Mineral Society
Silver State Rock and Mineral
Nevada Oil Gas and Mining Board
Exploration Geologist of Nevada
Ferret Exploration, Inc.*
Nicor, Inc.
Tenneco, Inc.

Recreational:

California Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs*
Nevada Outdoor Recreation Association*
Pershing City Sportsman
Lassen County Fish and Game Commission
Emigrant Trail Committee
California Off Road Vehicle Association
National Outdoor Coalition
Duck Unlimited

Consultation and Coordination

Lassen Motorcycle Club*
American Motorcycle Association
NOLOC
Lassen Fin and Antler
Glass Mountain Four Wheel Drive Club
Susanville Parks and Recreation
Oregon-California Trails Association*

Other:
Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 6356*

COMMENT LETTERS AND RESPONSES

All letters postmarked by June 27, 1984, were reviewed to determine if they met the required criteria for response, i.e., discussion of the adequacy of the DEIS or the views of the public on how much wilderness is appropriate to designate. As many letters raised the same points, representative letters were selected that contained substantive comments which presented new data, questioned facts or commented on issues bearing directly on the DEIS or the environmental impacts of the proposed action were fully evaluated and given responses. Changes or additions to the DEIS have been incorporated into the revisions and corrections of this final statement.

A total of 378 written responses and 23 oral responses were submitted on the Draft EIS.

The following summarizes both published and non published wilderness comments by alternative on the wilderness recommendations:

32 comments recommended Alternative I (All Wilderness).

2 comments recommended Alternative II (Resource Conflict Resolution).

45 comments recommended more acreage be recommended suitable as wilderness than in the BLM's proposal.

32 comments recommended Alternative VI (TRT and BLM proposal).

256 comments indicated that they could support Alternative VI (TRT and BLM proposal). They stated they would have liked to see additional acreage in seven of the thirteen WSAs recommended suitable.

15 comments indicated they would prefer less acreage recommended suitable than the BLM proposal by objecting to an individual WSA or generally indicating too much area was recommended as suitable.

6 comments recommended Alternative V (No Wilderness) for either an individual WSA or all of the WSAs.

13 comments took no position on a recommendation.

In preparation of the final EIS, all comments, including those from the hearing transcripts, were reviewed and considered. Comments that presented new new data, questioned findings and analyses, or raised questions or issues relating directly to the environmental impacts of the Proposed Action or alternatives were responded to and are included in this document. General comments favoring a specific alternative have been noted and considered, but required no specific response. Representative letters reflecting these General comments are included in this EIS. In addition, comments addressing items outside of the scope of this EIS were not responded to.

Comments and related responses are identified by the number of the comment letter and the number of the comment in the letter. Comment letters are numbered in the order they were received but are indexed by agencies (Federal, State, and Local), organization, and individuals.

Consultation and Coordination

INDEX OF WRITTEN COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

Elected Officials

Lassen County Board of Supervisors - Letter No. 298

Federal Agencies

Department of Defense:
Sierra Army Depot* - Letter No. 318

Department of the Interior:
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation - Mid Pacific Regional Office, - Letter No. 9
Sacramento
- Washington D.C.
U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service - Sheldon Antelope Refuge, - Letter No. 3
- Division of Ecological Services,
Sacramento
- Washington D.C.
U. S. Geological Survey - Washington D.C. - Letter No. 376
National Park Service - Western Regional Office, - Letter No. 19
San Francisco
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency - San Francisco, - Letter No. 378
California

State Agencies, Commissions or Boards

Nevada:
Community Services - Letter No. 292
Department of Minerals - Letter No. 292
State Parks - Letter No. 292
State Historic Preservation Officer - Letter No. 292

California:
The Resources Agency - Letter No. 262
Division of Mines and Geology - Letter No. 262
Department of Parks and Recreation - Letter No. 262
State Lands Commission - Letter No. 262
Department of Fish and Game - Letter No. 262
Office of Planning and Research - Letter No. 262
Department of Water Resources - Letter No. 262

Organizations

Sierra Club - National Office - Letter No. 356
- Redwood Chapter - Letter No. 249
- Mother Lode Chapter - Letter No. 352
Natural Resources Defense Council - Letter No. 227
The Wilderness Society - Letter No. 23
California Native Plant Society - Letter No. 228
NE California for Wilderness - Letter No. 354
California Wilderness Coalition - Letter No. 370
Defenders of Wildlife - Letter No. 300
Audubon Society - Letter No. 14

Organizations (continued)

Plumas Wilderness Friends - Letter No. 12
American Wilderness Alliance - Letter No. 277
Ferret Exploration, Inc. - Letter No. 257
Lassen Motorcycle Club - Letter No. 11
Oregon-California Trails Association - Letter No. 7
Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 6356 - Letter No. 310

Individuals

Don Coops - Letter No. 30
John Preschutti - Letter No. 35
Elliot E. Breushaw - Letter No. 159
David B. Harvey - Letter No. 248
John P. Baker - Letter No. 263
H.G. Wilshire - Letter No. 265
Frank Vaughn - Letter No. 293
Carl L. Weidert - Letter No. 353
Curtis Spaulding - Letter No. 355

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Division of Ecological Services
2800 Cottage Way, Room E-1803
Sacramento, California 95825

April 10, 1985

Memorandum

To: District Manager, Bureau of Land Management, Susanville, California

From: Field Supervisor, Division of Ecological Services, Sacramento, California

Subject: Preliminary Wilderness Recommendations - Eagle Lake Cedarville Study Areas, Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EC 85/25)

Due to funding limitations we are unable to review the statement and thus have no comments to offer.

RECEIVED
SUSANVILLE DISTRICT
APR 12 1985

James D. Carson
for James J. McKevitt

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FWS/EC, Washington, D.C.

OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION

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norary Director

ussell E. Dickenson, Director
National Park Service
Washington DC

7-1

April 22, 1985

Dept. of Int
RECEIVED
APR 24 1985
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
SUSANVILLE, CALIFORNIA

Mr. C. Rex Cleary
Susanville District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
P.O. Box 1090
Susanville, California 96130

Dear Mr. Cleary:

I have heard from Lee Delaney concerning the ACEC designation for High Rock Canyon, and I wish to thank you for asking him to respond to me concerning that topic. As I have said to him in my letter of response dated April 20, 1985, we must regret the fact that the ACEC management program is not formulated at this time so that its relationship to these various proposed wilderness areas surrounding the High Rock Canyon complex could be fully understood. It makes it most difficult to respond intelligently to either the Wilderness Area proposals or the ACEC without having the knowledge of how they are ultimately going to be integrated. Also in my letter to Lee, I have recommended most strongly that, when an ACEC management program is finally established for the High Rock Complex, the preservation and enhancement of the unique historical values of the area be assigned priority status by the BLM and that some sort of coordinated management arrangement be established with the Winnemucca District which will treat the entire Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon portion of the Applegate-Lassen Trail as one management unit.

Before going on to comment upon the preliminary wilderness recommendations for the Eagle Lake-Cedarville study areas, let me digress briefly and cite just one example of the sort of problem we can see arising from the presently ill-defined relationship between the proposed Wilderness Areas and the ACEC management programs. Let us suppose that it is determined by BLM personnel that vehicular use of High Rock Canyon has reached the point at which the historical-cultural values of the canyon are in jeapardy, and this assessment brings about a decision to close the canyon to vehicular traffic. It might still be possible to effect reasonable access to the historical corridor by the construction of an access road along the rim of the canyon--thus preserving the visual and physical integrity of the canyon itself a yet allowing the public access to it at various points by footpaths. Are the boundaries of the proposed Wilderness Areas and those of the established ACEC conceived in such a way that such an option remains open?

We are not in any way suggesting that the proposed Wilderness Areas should be further reduced (in fact, we will, in another portion of this letter ask for an enlargement of the Wilderness Areas over those recommended by the TRT), but what we would like to point out is that, at this point in the process, some thought must be devoted to this sort of problem. We would very much regret seeing the BLM precluded from exercising several reasonable and otherwise very viable options for the management of the historical

and cultural values of the ACEC through a simple failure to foresee just this sort of situation arising.

Concerning the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Eagle Lake-Cedarville Study Area there are several general comments we would like to make before going on to specifics.

We find the TRT concept to be a most attractive one on the surface, but we also see several major flaws in how the concept has come to be implemented. Our criticisms are in no way meant to question the service and dedication and contributions of the persons involved in this TRT program because we know from first-hand observation just how hard they all worked to reach consensus and how seriously they took their responsibilities. They are only to be commended. It would seem to us, however, that a very fundamental flaw in this entire TRT approach stems from the fact that it should have been implemented at the very beginning of the wilderness designation process when the original BLM Intensive Inventory was being made and not just in the final winnowing process. We very strongly suspect that there would have been a great deal more of the public domain being considered and recommended for wilderness designation at this point in time had this been the case. There is also some considerable room for built-in bias present in the method adopted by the BLM for designating categories for representation and choosing members for the TRT process (granted that any method of choosing representation is open to some criticism on these grounds). Finally, we can see in this TRT approach a very real danger of the BLM being tempted to surrender too large a measure of responsibility in the final decision-making processes to a very small group of people who, after all, have been purposely picked to represent indentifiable special interests. This approach may look very good and sounds most democratic, but the BLM has a far more extensive mandate to meet as the representative of the Federal government--a responsibility for doing what is best for <u>all</u> of the American people, a responsibility to make decisions not just under present circumstances and thinking but to make those decisions with an eye towards the benefit of all future generations. It is a much broader, more demanding, and solemn obligation than might be expected of any local TRT, and it involves a responsibility which can only be legitimately delegated to a certain point.

As far as our comments on the Wilderness Areas under study here go, we wish to restrict them to those five WSA's which are of particular concern to us: Wall Canyon, Little High Rock Canyon, Yellow Rock Canyon, High Rock Canyon, and East Fork High Rock Canyon. For all of these areas we strongly support the acreages put forth under Alternative II and not the Preferred Alternatives of the TRT or, in the case of Wall Canyon, the BLM. Our reason for supporting Alternative II with
7-2 its much larger wilderness acreage designations stems from our assessment that these acreages are absolutely essential to ensuring adequate buffering for the high quality core wilderness areas. After all, the initial BLM Intensive Inventory process has already reduced the WSA's to what we consider to be a bare-bones proposal for permitting a genuine <u>quality</u> wilderness experience in this type of high desert country.

Furthermore, it is our assessment that most of the specific reasons cited by the TRT for reducing wilderness acreages from those recommended in Alternative II are not at all persuasive. Just to cite a few examples which have led us to this conclusion: We do not see that vehicl manageability problems are a valid reason for excluding large acreages from wilderness designation. Vehicle management may, indeed, be a seriou problem and major concern, but it is a problem that can certainly be handled, given the necessary resources--resources which Congress is responsible for providing and has indicated by the very enactment of wilderness legislation that it is willing to provide. We do not see that it is either up to the BLM or the TRT to second-guess Congress on this. If an area otherwise meets the qualifications for wilderness designation, then it should be so designated, and Congress should then be permitted to meet its obligations in the matter.

Concerning TRT recommendations for exclusion of wilderness acreage under the Mineral category: Time and time again, the Barringer Report is cited and is used as the basis for these exclusions. At the very same time the caveat "this report does not provide data which will allow the assignment of economic significance to the individual above background areas, nor will it indicate whether or not a mine could be de-
7-3 veloped" is attached. We can find no legal basis (see Table 2-1 and Appendix of this DEIS) for exclusions here. As we read the law, it does not allow for exclusion on the basis of mere speculation that minerals might be present somewhere. As the law requires, these lands have, indeed, remained open to mineral entry and development all these years since the wilderness legislation was enacted by Congress, and now they should be closed to such entry and development if they meet wilderness qualifications.

Lastly, much more potential wilderness acreage seems to have bee excluded under the TRT proposals for reasons relating to grazing. we read the guidelines, they state that grazing can continue in wilderness areas (and they still can qualify as wilderness areas) but that any new rangeland improvements are to be restricted to providing resource protection and management. They are not to be undertaken to increase numbers of livestock. We can accept the reasoning that certain
7-4 practices such as treatment with herbicides may be necessary to maintain forage capacity, but we read this as being allowed as a resource management practice, and we certainly fail to see why such a thing as "a proposed 700 acre range improvement seeding" (p. 2-103, Little High Rock Canyon) is to be considered a valid basis for excluding further acreage from wilderness designation. If this bit of range needs to be "improved" by seeding in order to carry a certain number of stock, then doesn't that really suggest that too many animals are presently being allowed to graze in the area for its carrying capacity? This entire argument for exclusion (and several very closely akin to it) would seem to us to be irrelevant to the wilderness designation process. The process is being turned on its head. Grazing enhancement is clearly not to be allowed in wilderness areas, but a proposal for such an enhancement program should not be allowed to keep an area from receiving wilderness designation. Let's get the horse back in front of the cart.

We ask that these comments be placed in the public record, and we hope that the final BLM wilderness recommendations for the Eagle Lake-Cedarville study areas will incorporate some of our recommendations for enhancing the value of this truly unique and marvelous resource of the American people.

Sincerely,

Thomas H. Hunt

Thomas H. Hunt

cc: Dr. Robert Griffin

Mr. Lee Delaney

Response to Letter No. 7

7-1 The roads you proposed would not be allowed in the Wilderness Study Areas either prior to designation for the entire WSA or after designation for the designated portion. Additionally, the Cowhead/Massacre Land Use Plan would require amendment to allow construction of additional roads in an area being managed for its primitive condition. These roads would not be allowed under the High Rock Canyon ACEC provisions either.

7-2 The wilderness study process does not recognize the concept of buffer zones. Each designated area is judged on its wilderness character and not as a buffer to additional areas.

7-3 The study process requires that the impacts of wilderness designation on other resources be evaluated. The Wilderness Act also requires that Congress shall be provided with information collected by the Bureau of Mines and the Geological Survey on the mineral potential of each area suitable for designation. It is only reasonable that the best available minerals information be considered in the EIS. The Barringer Report provides the most current and comprehensive information available for portions of the study area at this time. Adjustment of boundaries based upon mineral potential is arguably somewhat speculative, but no more so than evaluating potential bighorn sheep reintroduction or potential large scale archaeological excavations. In all cases where potential activities and impacts are considered, the professional judgement of the geologist, biologist or archaeologist in conjunction with the best available information, is used as the basis for alternative boundaries and impact analysis.

7-4 While there is a significant amount of discussion regarding livestock related issues in the DEIS the actual acreage with significant resource conflicts with livestock management is very small. Four seeding sites (4,700 acres) in WSA's 913, 914 and 1013 were the only direct resource conflicts identified between livestock and wilderness designation. Seedings are a common and acceptable practice to increase available forage for livestock allowing non-seeded acres to receive the needed rest as well as avoiding economically damaging reductions.

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
MID-PACIFIC REGIONAL OFFICE
2800 COTTAGE WAY
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95825

9

IN REPLY
REFER TO: MP-150

APR 26 1985

To: District Manager, Bureau of Land Management, Susanville, California

From: ASSISTANT Regional Director, Sacramento, CA

Subject: Preliminary Wilderness Recommendations Eagle Lake--Cedarville Study Areas Draft Environmental Impact Statement

We have reviewed the draft statement and find that the proposals would have no impact on Bureau projects, plans or operations.

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment.

Lawrence F. Hancock

DEPT. OF INTERIOR
RECEIVED
APR 29 1985
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
SUSANVILLE, CALIFORNIA

LASSEN MOTORCYCLE CLUB
1717 Third Street
Susanville, California 96130

RECEIVED
SUSANVILLE DISTRICT
MAY 3 1985

May 1, 1985

Rex Cleary, Susanville District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
P. O. Box 1090
Susanville CA 96130

The Lassen Motorcycle Club has had the opportunity to participate in the Wilderness Study process since the early review stages. During the first public meeting in April, 1984, the Lassen Motorcycle Club submitted a map showing the trails the motorcycle club has used for the last twenty years for organized, sanctioned and non-sanctioned events. At that time, we also submitted a letter documenting the evolution of trail riding, of how the trail rider many years ago utilized existing roads, and how the trail riders today prefer the "enduro" type trail because of the challenge and less conflict with other recreational users. In June, 1984, at a District Advisory Council meeting, the Lassen Motorcycle Club submitted a second letter on our concerns of recreational losses due to proposed wilderness designation in the Skedaddle and Dry Valley Rim areas. In November, 1984, the Lassen Motorcycle Club gathered approximately 150 signatures from users who would like to have this part of the desert left open for recreational uses.

Our efforts have had good results during the Technical Review Team process. Our map was used extensively by the Technical Review Team and the preferred alternative has wilderness boundaries around many of the recreational trails that the Lassen Motorcycle Club uses. The preferred alternative protects all of the trails that have been used for the Diamondback Enduro every year since 1969.

11-1 However, the draft EIS preliminary wilderness recommendation does state that, under the Dry Valley Rim preferred alternative, "Adverse impact is moderate to high on local trail riders because of loss of high quality riding opportunities on 18 miles of trails." During the TRT field review of Dry Valley Rim, we are sure the team had difficulty identifying these 18 miles of existing trails. This is because the recreational use by motorcyclists has very little impact on the land. Nevertheless, the loss of the 18 miles of trail riding has a significant impact on current recreational users and future recreational users.

11-2 The wilderness designation in the Dry Valley Rim area will eliminate many recreational opportunities. The preferred alternative will close over 9.0% of BLM Susanville District's land that it manages, yet only 0.2% of the Susanville District's land is "open" to off-road vehicle use which is at the Fort Sage Mountains. This land at Fort Sage Mountain is currently under TRT review which will probably result in the elimination and compromise of some existing ORV uses.

The Lassen Motorcycle Club believes that the BLM Susanville District has put a great deal of effort into compiling their preliminary wilderness recommendations. It is our hope that the district will also put as much effort into providing recreational opportunities on the land it manages, not just for ORV use, but for all the people. One step that can be taken to keep recreational opportunities open is for the Dry Valley Rim NOT to be recommended for wilderness.

Thank you for the opportunity for the Lassen Motorcycle Club to provide input during this public review process.

Sincerely,

LASSEN MOTORCYCLE CLUB

sm:seh

Response to Letter No. 11

11-1 The loss of 18 miles of motorcycle trail in the Dry Valley Rim WSA was considered by the Technical Review Team. Boundaries that define the recommended suitable area in most cases were adjusted to exclude areas of regular motorized use. The resulting recommended unsuitable areas would then remain open for off highway vehicle use and, as noted in your letter, this includes the trail segment through the WSA used in the Diamondback Enduro course. In considering the 18 miles of trail within the recommended suitable area of Dry Valley Rim, the Technical Review Team decided that wilderness values in the area warranted wilderness designation and that trail riding losses would be minor relative to the overall area that would remain available for trail riding in the recommended unsuitable designation.

11-2 Presently, Susanville District lands are currently managed for ORV use as follows: less than 1% closed; 42% limited (vehicle use allowed on existing roads and trails); and 58% open. The majority of the limited acreage is composed of wilderness study areas that are managed as limited use areas until Congress acts on the wilderness designation issue. If Congress adopts the 13 proposed actions as recommended in this EIS, approximately 9% of the Susanville District would be closed to ORV use. WSA lands not designated as wilderness would be released from their current limited ORV use category. This would result in the Susanville District managing approximately 14% of the District as limited and 77% as open for ORV use.

Public lands in the Fort Sage Mountains are managed as open for ORV use in T.26N. R.17E. and as limited to existing roads and trails in T.25N. R.17E. The open area is approximately 6,590 acres which comprises less than 1% of the 1,582,834 acres currently managed as open for ORV use throughout the Susanville District (58% of the Susanville District).

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BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
SUSANVILLE, CALIFORNIA

12

Friends of Plumas Wilderness

May 4, 1985

District Manager Rex Cleary
Bureau of Land Management
705 Hall Street
Susanville, CA. 96103

Dear Mr. Cleary;

This letter is to express our support of the wilderness recommendations for Tunnison Mountain, Skeddaddle Mountain, Eagle Head/Dry Valley Rim, Twin Peaks, Little High Rock Canyon, High Rock Canyon, East Fork High Rock Canyon, Sheldon Contiguous and Massacre Rim. We lament, however, BLM's failure to recommend Wall Canyon and urge you to change your recommendation to "suitable for wilderness". We are also concerned that important uplands from Little High Rock Canyon, High Rock Canyon and E. Fork High Canyon were excluded. We are further disappointed at your non-wilderness recommendations for Yellow Rock Canyon and Five Springs Mountain, both of which are prime back-packing areas.

Wilderness is America's non-renewable resource whose existance is essential for our nation's physical as well as cultural well-being. Will our children thank us if our failure to plan responsibly now robs them of their rights to future opportunities? What about the rare,Wall Canyon sucker, the bighorn sheep, prarie falcons, golden eagles, antelope, mule deer and the desert creeks, the lush riparian corridors and the rocky wildflower meadows, all so fragile in the high arid desert ecosystems? If we destroy them they are gone forever.

The ten aforementioned areas are especially suited for wilderness for the following reasons: The Skedaddle Mountains are home to wild horses and nesting golden eagles and prarie falcons. They are easily accessible and therefore are an outstanding recreation area for hikers, backpackers and climbers. The High Rock Canyon Complex offers unique historic and prehistoric resources; it has been proposed as a national monument, is a critical habitat for bighorn sheep reintroduction as well as for wild horses and golden eagles. It is a spectacular natural "museum" of norwest Nevada. Wall Canyon's 28,000 acre pristine core has (by BLM admition) no conflicts from grazing, mining or ORV's, and the raptors, sage grouse, antelope and mule deer that inhabit that region need the protection that a wilderness designation would provide. Finally, Massacre Rim includes thousands of acres of the old western junipers, some of them three feet in diameter. Certainly these deserve our respect and admiration.

We will look forward to working with you on the responsible preservation of the west's remaining integral ecosystems. Please send us a copy of the wilderness proposals, maps and the DEIS.

Sincerely, Elisa Adler, for Friends of Plumas Wilderness

P.O. BOX 133, QUINCY, CALIFORNIA 95971

Dept. of Interior
RECEIVED
MAY 9 1985
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
MUSKOGEE, OKLAHOMA

P.O. Box 1502
Susanville, CA 96130
May 1, 1985

Rex Cleary, District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Susanville District
P.O. Box 1090
Susanville, CA 96130

Dear Mr. Cleary,

I am the President of the Eagle Lake Chapter of the National Audubon Society. Our group represents all Audubon members in Northeastern California in Modoc and Lassen Counties. We enjoy recreation on the Bureau of Land Management lands in the Susanville District. We have much respect for the wilderness resources and wildlife on these lands.

Many of our chapter members have reviewed the draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Eagle Lake-Cedarville study areas dated October 1984. Our chapter supports all the wilderness recommendations contained in the preferred alternative. We agree with the BLM recommendations that the following areas should be designated wilderness: 1. Tunnison Mountain; 2. Skedaddle Mountain; 3. Dry Valley Rim; 4. Twin Peaks; 5. Little High Rock Canyon; 6. High Rock Canyon; 7. East Fork Rock Canyon; 8. Sheldon Contiguous; 9. Massacre Rim

In addition, we support a wilderness recommendation for the Wall Canyon Wilderness Study Area. The 28,000 acre core zone of Wall Canyon has no other resource conflicts and has significant wilderness values. The area provides an important habitat for raptors, sage grouse, antelope, mule deer, and a rare fish, the Wall Canyon Sucker. Wall Canyon should definitely be recommended for wilderness!

Greater value is placed on wilderness as public lands become more developed. Wilderness is a sanctuary for human recreation and enjoyment. Wilderness provides wildlife habitats for important animal species such as the Golden Eagle, Prairie Falcon, and Sage Grouse. Wilderness can not be restored once it is lost. As a result, we request that none of the acreages from any of the nine areas proposed for wilderness be deleted. We particularly request that no acreage of Skeddadle Mountain wilderness be deleted. We have studied possible conflicts regarding the Sierra Army Depot, and we find that wilderness will have little or no affect on the Sierra Army Depot and its continuing operations. In fact, wilderness could actually protect the Depot by precluding incompatible development. Again, we ask that Wall Canyon be recommended for wilderness. Please protect the wilderness status of these areas until Congress formally designates them wilderness.

Thank you for this opportunity to express our views. Your hard work in specifying wilderness areas to preserve wildlife, plant and animal habitats, and areas of great geological and archaeological significance is appreciated. We would also like to acknowledge your willingness to include input from various citizens representing all interest groups in developing the Technical Review Teams to decide upon the Wilderness designations.

We trust that Congress will approve your recommendations to set aside these remaining wilderness areas in the West for present and future generations to enjoy.

Sincerely,

Marjorie Lattka

Marjorie Lattka
President
Eagle Lake Chapter
National Audubon Society

United States Department of the Interior
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WESTERN REGION
450 GOLDEN GATE AVENUE, BOX 36063
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94102

19

IN REPLY REFER TO:
L7619 (WR-RPE)

May 16, 1985

Memorandum

To: District Manager, Bureau of Land Management, Susanville

From: Associate Regional Director, Resource Management and Planning, Western Region

Subject: Review of Preliminary Wilderness Recommendations and Draft Environmental Statement, Eagle Lake-Cedarville Study Areas, Lassen County, California and Washoe and Humboldt Counties, Nevada (DES-85/18).

We have reviewed the subject wilderness recommendations and draft environmental statement and have no comments to offer. We appreciate the opportunity to review your proposals.

cc:
WASO (762)

Dept. of Interior
RECEIVED
MAY 20 1985
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
SUSANVILLE, CALIFORNIA

THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY

CALIFORNIA/NEVADA REGION

May 17, 1985

RECEIVED
MAY 28 1985
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
SUSANVILLE, CALIFORNIA

Mr. Rex Cleary
District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
705 Hall Street
Susanville, CA 96130

Dear Mr. Cleary:

The Wilderness Society appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Eagle Lake-Cedarville Study Areas.

Before we comment on BLM's recommendation for the thirteen WSAs reviewed in this document, we would like to commend BLM for an outstanding job on the report's maps. We appreciate the time, effort and expense that went into completing these maps, and would encourage other BLM offices to follow your example.

However, we are not as enthused with BLM's wilderness recommendations, or lack thereof. These thirteen areas represent the remaining roadless areas of the Great Basin ecosystem; to recommend a mere one-third as wilderness is unconscionable. We have a number of problems with this document, and considering its length, will try to deal with them in an organized fashion.

23-1 First of all, there are two additional alternatives that should have been considered by BLM. Has BLM made any attempt to purchase or exchange land with inholders? This should have been considered as an alternative. Also, in the scoping process a "one wilderness" alternative (all the areas joined in a single wilderness area) was requested to be considered; this was not done.

23-2 Secondly, were any areas omitted from study because of then-Secretary Watt's decision to eliminate WSAs smaller than 5,000 acres and with split estate rights? If so, what does BLM plan to do now as a result of Judge Karleton's recent decision to reinstate those areas?

1791-A PINE STREET, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94109
(415) 771-2020

The predominant arguments used against wilderness designation throughout the EIS -- manageability problems and the influence of outside sights and sounds -- are insufficient basis to leave these natural areas open to
23-3 development and destruction by ORVs. FLPMA ordered the BLM to manage these wilderness study areas as wilderness in the interim. What efforts has BLM made to control these problems? Furthermore, manageability and "absence of outside sight and sounds" are not criteria for wilderness designation as mandated in the Wilderness Act of 1964.

Specifically, we would like to make the following comments.

High Rock Canyon Complex

We encourage BLM to adopt a wilderness recommendation for all four areas of the canyon complex: High Rock, Little High Rock, East Fork High Rock and Yellow Rock. From a management standpoint it seems ludicrous not to manage these four WSAs as one area. And considering the outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation offered, coupled with the diverse wildlife and archaelogical values, this complex is a prime candidate for wilderness recommendation.

The Wilderness Society is also puzzled at the fact that Yellow Rock Canyon seems to be the only one of the four areas in BLM's eyes without wilderness values. This seems highly unlikely considering these areas are all part of the
23-4 same ecological and geological complex. We have heard that "yellow rock" carries some meaning for miners; is it possible that a non-wilderness designation is simply the result of speculative mining interests? Otherwise, we see no reason why BLM did not recommend even a portion of Yellow Rock as suitable for wilderness.

In the study BLM states that the impact of of man's imprints in all four areas is low. In Yellow Rock Canyon there is also a low level of visitor use. Little Rock Canyon is proposed as a National Register District. Bighorn sheep are planned to be reintroduced into all the areas. High Rock Canyon has a high density of raptors. The canyon complex is part of the historic Lassen-Applegate Trail, which is on the National Register of Historic Places. In fact, there is an organized effort to place the entire region into National

Monument status. It is obvious that BLM has been presented with an opportunity to create a unique canyon complex wilderness area in a state that is severely lacking in wilderness. We encourage BLM to take advantage of this precious opportunity.

Wall Canyon

23-5 We also urge a wilderness recommendation for Wall Canyon. BLM admitted that the 28,000 acre core has no conflicts with grazing, mining or off-road vehicle use. This WSA has two desert creeks that have cut deep canyons into Boulder Mountain, one of which contains a unique fish species, the Wall Canyon Sucker. The Technical Review Team appears not to be the only one having trouble making up its mind on this area. BLM cites as one of the reasons for its non-wilderness recommendation that Wall Canyon WSA "lacks unique scenic, vegetative or wildlife features." Yet BLM also states that this area features diverse wildlife, including pronghorn antelope and golden eagles. Additionally, the size of this area makes it a prime candidate for wilderness; opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be many.

Sheldon Contiguous

Located adjacent to the proposed wilderness in the Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge, this area boasts open plateaus, blockfaulted scarps, ephemeral lakes and a volcanic cone. It is alarming that BLM has recommended a mere 3% as wilderness. This area would be a natural extension of the refuge, and we urge BLM to change its recommendation to entirely suitable.

Massacre Rim

23-6 Massacre Rim's huge size, high elevation, flowing springs and outstanding archaeological values make it a prime candidate for wilderness. We appreciate BLM's intentions in recommending that 48,730 acres be designated an ACEC to protect the rich cultural values; however, an administrative designation is never as strong nor as permanent as a Congressional one. We instead urge BLM to change its recommendation of an ACEC to that of wilderness.

23-7 We are also alarmed to hear of the cutting of old western junipers by locals within the WSA. Is this a grandfathered use? Are nonimpairment criteria being adhered to? What, if any, are the impacts to the environment from this practice? We hope that BLM has been closely monitoring these cutting activities and ensuring that the wilderness qualities of the area are being maintained.

Tunnison

23-8 Many of the problems with BLM's recommendation for Tunnison WSA apply to the other areas in the Surprise Resource Area. One major objection The Wilderness Society has is that BLM uses the proposed Trans-Sierra Utility Corridor as a rationale for non-designation, when it should in fact be the other way around. The Trans-Sierra Utility Corridor should not be established in a wilderness or a wilderness study area. Secondly, there are no impacts of the potential corridor anywhere in the environmental impacts section. If its presence is a reason for releasing the WSA, then its impacts should be listed.

23-9 Regarding Tunnison Mountain specifically, the argument that inholdings could present manageability problems if built upon is an insignificant one. This area contains the year-round Willow Creek, quality trout fishing, ponderosa-pine/juniper woodlands and panoramic views from Tunnison Mountain. These qualities should be protected as wilderness.

Five Springs

23-10 In addition to diverse wildlife, Five Springs WSA hosts a California Native Plant Society List #2 plant, scutellaria holmgrenorium, on its west side. Springs are abundant and no doubt welcome by users in the desert heat. Outstanding primitive recreation opportunities abound.

23-11 The impacts of increased livestock and road use as a result of non-designation, especially on the riparian areas, were not discussed in the Environmental Consequences section.

BLM offers no explanation for why this entire area was recommended as non-suitable for wilderness. Possibilities for this recommendation appear to be the presence of
23-12 recalcitrant inholders and ORV use. If so, these are very weak arguments. Considering the problems BLM has had with the one inholder -- numerous grazing violations and court cases -- it is curious that he is being allowed to remain, much less have a voice in how BLM will manage its land. Regarding ORV use, BLM refers to problems resulting from those "willing to fight through rough, rocky terrain." The
23-13 hardiness of a few ORV drivers should not be a factor in BLM's decision.

Skedaddle

Of all the WSAs studied in this report, the Skedaddles are without a doubt the most deserving of wilderness protection. This area offers everything: rugged cliffs, eroded volcanic mountains, lush riparian corridors, spring-fed aspen groves,
23-14 wildlife, and outstanding recreational opportunities. With the exception of the Lassen County Board of Supervisors, the support for wilderness designation of this WSA has been strong.

Again, we are having a difficult time deciphering the reasons behind BLM's failure to designate the entire WSA as wilderness. There is little or no potential for mineral and energy development. The proposed construction of a wood burning plant two miles away should not be a factor; the presence of the WSA should instead be a factor in the placement of the plant. Ammunition of detonation at the Sierra Army Depot only sometimes results in smoke and sound drifting over the WSA. Furthermore, the occurence of the Lassen Motorcycle Club race should have absolutely no bearing on wilderness designation; in fact, in should not
23-15 even be occuring on or near the WSA. It is unbelievable that BLM has been allowing this to occur in direct violation of the IMP. What are the grounds on which BLM has condoned this activity? Was an EA completed? We would very much like to know the background on this race.

In the face of such spectacular wilderness qualities, the above arguments in favor of a not suitable recommendation carry very little weight. We urge the BLM to recommend the entire Skedaddle Mountains WSA as wilderness.

Dry Valley Rim

23-16 Considering its proximity to the Skedaddles, the above comments apply for the most part to Dry Valley Rim WSA, as well. BLM also refers to needing the State Director's approval to use motorized vehicles to gather wild horses should this area become wilderness. What has BLM been doing in the interim? State Director approval is also necessary under the IMP. Has BLM requested this approval?

Furthermore, deleting lands from wilderness recommendation simply to reduce patrol problems is unacceptable.

Buffalo Hills

23-17 Buffalo Hills WSA offers two distinctive features: Buffalo Creek Canyons and Hole-in-the-Ground, a mile-wide volcanic caldera. It also boasts high archaelogical potential, outstanding recreational opportunities and abundant water sources. We again fail to see why BLM does not recognize this area as wilderness. The only mention of any type of resource or manageability conflict we find in the DEIS is the presence of two inholders who are opposed to wilderness. They are guaranteed access to their property, so we can not see what their objection would be, especially since one of them does not even use the land for grazing purposes. Furthermore, two people cannot make the decision for generations of people who would enjoy a wilderness experience.

23-18 We would also like more information on the "hay-gathering" mentioned in Hole-in-the-Ground. How long has this been going on? What is the hay used for? What materials, equipment, etc. are used? Was an Environmental Assessment prepared?

Lastly, we are alarmed at BLM's mention that "additional (wild horse) trap sites may be needed and may fall within the WSA." Trap sites do not "fall" within an area; BLM chooses to place them there. And BLM should not put trap sites in a WSA, or at least not without a detailed study of the impacts.

Twin Peaks

23-19 We do commend BLM for recommending over one half of this area as wilderness. However, we see little ground for not recommending the remaining acres as wilderness, as well. This area features many peaks, canyons, hills and creeks, including the perennial Buffalo Creek and Smoke Creek. Many types of wildlife are commonly seen, and Smoke Creek has potential as a trout fishery. We would suggest that BLM close the access routes on the east and south, and recommend these areas as wilderness. Hunters can easily hike the half mile in and carry chukar the half mile back out.

Again, the reasons against complete wilderness recommendation appear to be objections by inholders and the potential utility corridor.

As in the High Rock Canyon complex, it would seem appropriate for BLM to manage Skedaddle Mountains, Dry Valley Rim, Five Springs, Twin Peaks and Buffalo Hills as one wilderness area. This would not only be a wise management move, but it would also represent a valuable addition to both California's and Nevada's wilderness systems.

We would like to reiterate two points in conclusion. One is the increasing trend of BLM to ignore the criteria presented in the Wilderness Act and to create criteria of its own in making wilderness recommendations. In this case, the outstanding wilderness qualities of the thirteen WSAs are being rejected in favor of questionable manageability and "outside sights and sounds" arguments. The Wilderness Society urges BLM to "get back on the track," and ensure the permanent protection of these precious areas.

And secondly, we would like to again thank BLM for the excellent maps. They facilitated the review of a rather difficult document.

Thank you for consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

Patricia Hedge

Patricia Hedge
Regional Director

Jeri Galbraith

Jeri Galbraith
Regional Assistant

Response to Letter No. 23

23-1 Acquisition of inholdings is addressed in the BLM Wilderness Management Policy (Sept. 1981) and is applicable to all alternatives. Quote "Acquisition of non-Federal lands within wilderness is authorized by purchase or exchange. When such lands are to be acquired, the BLM will seek to acquire the mineral rights as well as the surface rights. Acquisition of privately-owned lands will occur only if the private owner concurs with the acquisition, or if the acquisition is specifically authorized by Congress to be accomplished by eminent domain." The all wilderness alternative does address the impacts of having all the WSA's designated as wilderness. In establishing the WSA boundaries it was determined that roads existed and formed the boundaries between some WSAs. Some are county graded roads other major BLM access roads, and some are low grade dirt roads but all were determined in the inventory to be roads. In the Draft EIS closure of roads between WSA's was considered with WSA's 913, 913A and 913B. A comparison of impacts between Alternative I and II in the Draft EIS showed that there were no significant differences between the two alternatives and closure of roads between these WSAs was dropped from further analysis in the final EIS.

23-2 The South Warner Contiguous WSA will be studied in a statewide study to be started in 1987. WSA's 913B and 914 contain split estate lands (private subsurface/ public surface). Those lands are included in this study and portions of the split estate lands are recommended for designation in one or more alternatives.

23-3 Outside sights and sounds and manageability are not environmental issues for wilderness study and both have been deleted from the final EIS as issues for analysis. The presence of outside sights and sounds, if significantly noticeable are identified in Chapter 3, the Affected Environment. However, outside sights and sounds are not considered for purposes of the environmental analysis. Manageability is a planning consideration that was used in determining boundaries for the partial alternatives. Manageability is also considered in the Wilderness Study Report which further describes the rationale of the wilderness recommendations analyzed in the Final EIS.

The WSA's are currently being managed not as wilderness, but in a manner to insure that wilderness values will not be compromised prior to a decision by Congress. This interim management includes patrols and denial of wilderness impairing projects.

23-4 All of the WSAs in the study have wilderness values as identified through the wilderness inventory process. The wilderness values for the Yellow Rock Canyon WSA include naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation. The WSA also contains the supplemental features of high quality scenic, wildlife and cultural values which would receive some benefits from wilderness designation. No known minerals exploration

has occurred. The recommendation of non-suitable by the TRT and BLM was made after examining the wilderness qualities of this area and all the WSAs within the study area and determining that this area did offer any unique or special features, or provide outstanding opportunities beyond those represented by the other WSAs.

23-5 The Wall Canyon Sucker was suggested as an endemic species in a 1948 survey of ancient lake basins. The survey presented no basis for the classification and no studies have confirmed or denied species status for the fish. Recently, the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) has requested additional information on the fish, but no studies have been undertaken. Fishery biologists disagree on whether the fish is unique or a common Tahoe Sucker. If the Wall Canyon Sucker does achieve FWS listing, then a management plan would be prepared with or without wilderness designation. Other wildlife species, such as pronghorn and golden eagles, are certainly not unique to the WSA and can be found in higher densities on more favorable habitat throughout the region. The core area does not contain the exceptional vegetative diversity found on the remainder of the WSA and private inholdings. The size of the core unit would certainly provide outstanding opportunities for solitude. The BLM, in making its decision looked at what the core area offered and determined that this area did not offer anything special to be added to the national wilderness preservation system as did some of the other nearby WSA's that were recommended for designation.

23-6 The ACEC (Area of Critical Environmental Concern) designation is not an alternative to wilderness designation. Each has different impacts to resources. The ACEC designation will increase the emphasis on archaeological and wildlife values while allowing extensive professional excavations not compatible with wilderness designation.

23-7 Issuance of permits for woodcutting within the WSA has been discontinued.

23-8 In general, the study corridors identified for the Trans Sierra Utility Corridor were reviewed as planning considerations to determine a range of alternative boundaries and were not solely responsible for a particular Proposed Action. Impacts of utility corridors on wilderness values are addressed in Chapter 4.

23-9 The distinctive values of Tunnison Mountain WSA that you stated in your letter, "year round Willow Creek, quality trout fishing, ponderosa pine/juniper woodlands and panoramic views from Tunnison Mountain", are all contained within the recommended suitable portion of Tunnison Mountain WSA. The unsuitable area is located primarily north of Tunnison Mountain. This area does not contain Willow Creek, has no perennial stream that supports a trout fishery, contains no ponderosa pine woodlands and contains 11 parcels of private land that could adversely impact wilderness if developed for recreational hunting cabins. The potential development of private inholdings is addressed in the Final EIS to determine the potential impacts on wilderness values resulting from the construction of access through portions of the WSA. A small portion of the unsuitable area contains

lower Willow Creek Canyon. Management provisions in the BLM Land Use Plan for the Willow Creek Planning Unit include the following management provisions for Willow Creek Canyon: exclude livestock grazing except at watering access points, close the canyon to vehicle use, improve the fishery habitat. These actions are not dependent upon wilderness or non-wilderness designation.

23-10 In Chapter III, Affected Environment, WSA CA-020-609, Five Springs, Scutellaria Holmgrenorium is identified as occurring on the western edge of the WSA. The impacts of the alternatives on this species have been included in the Environmental Consequences Chapter.

23-11 Livestock use is anticipated to remain at current use levels within our 15 to 20 year planning projects. Non-designation will not result in increased livestock use. Livestock use levels are not dependent upon wilderness or non wilderness status, but rather range condition. Impacts of off-road vehicle use are discussed in Chapter 4 for each alternative under Wilderness Values.

23-12 Chapter 1 page 53, in the Final EIS states rationale for the non-suitable recommendation. The private inholder referred to is not licensed to graze livestock on public land. Past violations have been met with BLM impoundment of trespass cows and BLM charging trespass fees. The inholder, however, has title to his private land and within the law can do as he chooses with his land.

23-13 Off-road vehicle travel both cross country and on four-wheel drive ways through the Five Springs WSA is a common activity associated with upland game hunting. This activity has adverse effects on wilderness qualities of solitude and opportunities for primitive recreation.

23-14 The Skeddadle Mountain WSA does offer interesting features and opportunities, as such a portion of the WSA has been recommended as suitable for wilderness designation. However, there are no spring fed aspen groves on Skedaddle Mountain. Aspen groves that occur on the north side of Skedaddle Mountain are located in areas where winter snowpack accumulations provide suitable conditions for aspen. The most reliable springs within the WSA area occur on private parcels. The largest meadow in the WSA located on Skedaddle Creek, is also privately owned.

23-15 An error in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) has been corrected. In the DEIS Chapter III, WSA 612, Section V. Recreation, second paragraph, second sentence, was incorrect in stating that the Enduro Course "utilizes ways through the southern segment of the WSA." The one day Enduro ride utilizes existing ways south of and outside the WSA. The course route around the Sierra Army Depot land follows existing ways outside the fenced Sierra Army Depot demolition area. These ways are located on Sierra Army Depot land within the military withdrawal area and not within the WSA. Once the course leaves the military withdrawal, it extends through BLM land south of the Skedaddle WSA. Allowing organized ORV events to pass through

WSA's on existing ways and trails is not in direct violation of Interim Management Policy. IMP page 17, Chapter III A.4 quote, "Organized ORV events may be allowed to pass through areas under wilderness review on existing ways and trails, so long as the BLM determined that such use satisfies the non-impairment criteria." An EA was completed on the course segment in WSA 615.

23-16 Wild horse gathering within the WSA has occurred using temporary portable corrals, helicopter and horseback gathering techniques and truck transport of gathering equipment and gathered horses. Vehicle travel has occurred primarily on existing ways. These actions meet the interim management policy's non-impairment criteria and do not require State Director approval.

23-17 The non-suitable recommendation for Buffalo Hills WSA is based on resource use conflict and quality of wilderness values. Large areas of vehicle accessible ground comprise much of the north, west and south sides of the WSA. These areas receive high levels of motorized access for hunting use. Hunting levels would drop significantly in these areas if motorized access were prohibited. A net loss of recreational resource use would result. The BLM evaluated the wilderness values and lack of special enhancing values associated with this WSA. It was determined that this WSA did not offer anything special to warrant its being added to the national wilderness preservation system as did some other nearby WSA's that were recommended for designation.

23-18 Hay gathering occurred on private land in Hole-in-the-Ground during the late 1800's. No haying operations presently occur there, however, potential exists for development for hay operations on private land.

23-19 The recommended suitable area contains approximately 6.5 miles of Buffalo Creek and 3 miles of Smoke Creek. Wilderness quality resource conflicts were the basis for determining the recommended suitable area. Lands outside the recommended suitable area have resource conflicts with potential utility corridor alignments, off-road vehicles used by hunters and/or contain lower quality wilderness values than the recommended suitable area.

Don Coops
P.O. Box 159
Cedarville, CA 96104

May 28, 1985

Dept. of Interior
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JUN 3 1985
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
ALTURAS, CALIFORNIA

Mr. Ed Hastey, State Director
Bureau of Land Management
California State Office
2800 Cottage Way, Rm E-2841
Sacramento, CA 95825

Dear Mr. Hastey:

In response to the Preliminary Wilderness recommendations on the Eagle Lake-Cedarville Study Area's Draft Environmental Impact Statement, I wish to comment on the Massacre Rim, CA-020-1013 area. This is my cattle allotment and I am very familiar with the area and the process used to designate the 23,260 acres as suitable. This is my allotment.

This allotment is no different than what is across the fence. I built that fence line according to my allotted AUM's and if the selected area in Alternative VI is suitable, so is the rest of the area.

When the team studied this area it was so large the environmentalists decided that they had to have some wilderness out of this and traded around and stalled until the other members let them have it in order to move on.

30-1 There is nothing unique or unusual about the part of Massacre Rim selected in Alternative VI. The same kind of country exists in the Sheldon recommended wilderness area to the northeast. This area only has roadless size. Because of the rocky nature and relatively rolling topography, it is totally unnecessary to designate this area wilderness. It will not change with or without wilderness and will never be seen by many people as it is distastefull to travel across because of rocky, cobbly conditions and a lack of anything breathtaking or unique to look at.

This area is however a good cattle range and hunting area and as such needs management and in some places development. There are also private inholdings that can require access that will interfere with wilderness.

This area does not present outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation. It is just like a great deal of Nevada, without roads, and in need of management in the future. It is and has been used by vehicles in hunting seasons for bow & arrow and gun hunters of antelope and deer and sage hens and BLM has been unable to controll this. It will continue with the only controlls on me and my cattle operation.

I am opposed to this wilderness designation because it is not wilderness quality, can't be enforced and won't change or deteriorate if not wilderness, thus eliminating the need. I am also being penalized for fencing my allotment by this designation.

Sincerely,

Don Coops

cc: Rex Cleary, Susanville

Response to Letter No. 30

30-1 The boundary selected in the proposed action was chosen as an identifiable boundary between the area recommended as non-wilderness ACEC with a need for archeological investigation including excavations and the area to be determined as wilderness.

There are no plans for management projects within the suitable portion which could not be constructed under wilderness management.

The BLM's field inventory did identify outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation on the suitable portion. Additionally, the TRT looked at the area and felt that it represented high quality wilderness. Some of the quality related factors were excellent wildlife hunting and viewing opportunities, good ecological conditions due in part to the commenters management efforts and the open vistas and sense of isolation provided on the high table country.

There is currently no access to the private inholdings and their owner has no known plans to seek access.

Friday May 31, 1985

Dear Mr. Cleary,

This letter concerns the wilderness areas that are currently under study in your district. I support wilderness designation for as much acreage as possible in these areas.

As a twelve year resident of Plumas County I know that this part of California and Nevada has been increasingly becoming a destination for local people looking for a desert wilderness experience. The preferred alternative as indicated in the Susanville BLM Wilderness Draft Environmental Impact Statement does not speak to this increasing local and nationwide need for, and use of wilderness areas. 35-1

Another point to consider, in this regard, is that once you have given boundries and names to these areas the public's awareness and use of them is bound to increase dramatically. This is your chance to make wise choices for the future.

Although, I support inclusion of all the study areas as wilderness, I would especially like to see the Massacre Rim area kept intact and at least the heart of the Wall Canyon area included in the final wilderness plan.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

John Breschutti

Dept. of Interior
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SUSANVILLE, CALIFORNIA

Response to Letter No. 35

35-1 The Bureau is in the process of producing many studies on the Wilderness Study Areas designated during the Wilderness Inventory phase. That these studies are being completed and that Congress is requiring them is a product of this recognized need to meet the demand for wilderness experiences. Use projections are considered in the Chapter 4 analysis for each WSA. In general, no significant increases were anticipated for any of the WSAs in this study.

Box 6235
Salt Lake City, Utah 84106

June 1, 1985

Eagle Lake-Cedarville
Wilderness E.I.S. Team Leader
Susanville District
Bureau of Land Management
Susanville, Calif.

Dear Sir:

RE.: COMMENTS ON EAGLE LAKE-CEDARVILLE Draft WILDERNESS E.I.S.

When credit is due, it should be given. You are to be commended in your courageous effort to make use of a multi-interest "Technical Review Team," your impressive assistance to this team in their attempt to reach a consensus, and in your decision to accept this team's consensus recommendation as your Preferred Alternative. In your willingness to receive high-quality public input, you are "light-years" ahead of certain other BLM district offices.

Nevertheless, I have two serious criticisms.

I. As is all too typical of your agency, the present administration, commodity interests and much of the passive public, there is a lack of appreciation or understanding of wilderness values.
What little remains of "natural wilderness" in our lower-48 States is not being given enough weight or emphasis against the other possible uses for these remarkable "by-passed" wild lands. Especially if "wilderness" is viewed in the Alaskan or Canadian context, it would be obvious that even conservationists are not doing enough to demand that wilderness values should be given a very high priority against non-essential commodity interests in an attempt to preserve some "real" (Alaska/Canadian-scale) wilderness in the lower-48.
Now, I would submit that your district is one of the more remote, inaccessible and least impacted in the West. Here, we have the possibility of perhaps some "real" (Alaska/Canadian-scale) wilderness, no? But your inventory identified for WSA only some 0.7 million acres out of your rather "wild" district of 2.8 million acres. So, here the bias against any "real" wilderness makes its impact.
Nevertheless, 0.7 million acres as potential wilderness is a sizable amount, and most any wilderness observer would have been pleased to see most of it recommended as such.
But such is not the case with your agency, nor apparently your assembled "technical review team." Range developments for common and mundane cattle grazing, common throughout your district, are used to deny wilderness recommendations to vast acreages. ORV access for stupid hunting opportunities, again widespread throughout your district, are used to deny wilderness recommendations for vast acreages.

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BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
SUSANVILLE, CALIFORNIA

You and your "review team" could certainly have erred more on the side of preservation.

May I refer you to p. 4-137 of the E.I.S.: "Wilderness designation...is not irreversible or irretrievable. Should national priorities and needs change, Congress has the option to relinquish wilderness designations... But, in areas not designated wilderness,...activities including range management facilities, utility lines, firewood cutting and increased livestock grazing, could cause irreversible and irretrievable damage to wilderness."

Thus, I conclude that you and your "review team" could certainly have erred more on the side of preservation. None of you are giving proper priority to wilderness values, especially when considered against non-essential commodity and ORV-based recreational uses that are common elsewhere throughout your district. You are in serious error.

159-1 II. You limited the scope of your "technical review team" to your wilderness areas only, whereas it would have been perfectly logical for them to consider the resources of your entire district. Instead, this "team" of multi-interest representatives had to reach an embattled consensus over only the "cream-of-the-crop" wild areas as represented in your already-restricted WSA inventory.

159-2 Would you allow wildlife, wilderness and archaeological types to "interfer" in decisions regarding prime and obvious priority-rangeland or priority-mineral areas or priority-ORV recreational areas? No-- there would be a howl of objections from the commodity users, right? But, this is just what you did when you allowed rancher, ORV and mining company reps to have "consensus-veto" over recommendations involving the "cream" of your wild lands.

From top to bottom, and despite your "review team," the dice remain loaded against a fair treatment for what precious little remains of our potential wilderness lands in the lower 48 States. Think Alaska or Canada, and with shame realize what we have already lost and--thanks to your agency and the present administration--what we are losing today in the lower-48.

Instead of the 237,500 (0.2 million) acres reached by your "review team" in a really unfair "consensus," you should be more honestly recommending as suitable for wilderness the 335,600 (0.3 million) acres from Alternative III-- acreage remaining after deletions for commodity and managability conflicts.

However, even 0.3 million acres seems too small when considering that we had 0.7 million acres of "cream" WSA inventory to work with. Actually, anything less than 0.5 or 0.6 million acres recommended for wilderness leads me to conclude that we need a new inventory (along the lines of what the special Desert Planning Staff did for the C.D.C.A.?) and a more favorable administration before accepting your alternatives as the final word on wilderness in your district.

Yours with a bad feeling,

Elliott E. Bernshaw

Elliott E. Bernshaw
one who has seen Canada
and loves the American West

Response to Letter No. 159

159-1 This Wilderness Study mandated by Congress follows on the heels of a Wilderness Inventory completed in November, 1980 (Chapter I, Wilderness Review Process) which did examine the resources of the entire District.

159-2 In the Bureau Planning System, it is standard procedure to consider all resources in decisions pertaining to uses of the public lands. In this effort, the Technical Review Team recommending to the Bureau was made up of a wide field of interests (Chapter I, Technical Review Team Process.)

Natural Resources Defense Council, Inc.

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227

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Dept. of Interior
RECEIVED
JUN 13 1985
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
SUSANVILLE, CALIFORNIA

June 10, 1985

Rex Cleary, District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
705 Hall Street
Susanville, CA 96130

Dear Mr. ~~Cleary~~ Rex:

I am writing on behalf of the Natural Resources Defense Council, Inc. (NRDC) and its 47,000 members and contributors, many thousands of whom live in Nevada and California, to support wilderness designation for ten of the study areas under consideration in the Susanville District.

Since its inception in 1970, NRDC has sought to protect wilderness values and to expand the National Wilderness Preservation System. We were gratified when Congress, in 1976, finally acknowledged the wilderness values of the Public Lands and the potential contribution they could make to the National System. The wilderness resource is a non-renewable one -- particularly on arid, high desert lands like those under consideration in your District. Yet, as you obviously know, wilderness is not a "single use." The wilderness study areas (WSAs) that we support and that are described below not only possess outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, they also support outstanding wildlife resources, including protected species, remarkable archeological and cultural resources, and exceptional scenery. Preservation of wilderness in the Susanville District would bring truly important additions to the National Wilderness System and truly important benefits to present and future generations. As Wallace Stegner, Pulitizer Prize winning novelist and historian, has said:

> We simply need that wild country available to us, even if we never do more than drive to its edge and look in. For it can be a means of reassuring ourselves of our sanity as creatures, a part of the geography of hope.

New England Office: 850 BOSTON POST ROAD • SUDBURY, MA. 01776 • 617 237-0472
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We specifically support wilderness recommendations for the nine areas you have proposed for wilderness. In addition to urging that their recommended acreages not be reduced, we specifically urge that certain of the nine be expanded and that, as indicated, a tenth area be added for the reasons discussed below.

High Rock Canyon, Little High Rock Canyon and East Fork High Rock Canyon: Our concern about the outstanding wilderness and other values of the High Rock Canyon area is long-standing. The area's historic and prehistoric resources, its value for golden eagles, bighorn sheep and wildlife and its fabulously beautiful canyons, streams and scenery are nationally known and their importance cannot be overemphasized. While we applaud the BLM for recommending approximately 58,000 acres for wilderness, we are extremely concerned about the elimination of significant acreage in each of these three areas and the total elimination of Yellow Rock Canyon.

Sheldon Contiguous Area. Our interest in this area dates from the same time as our interest in the High Rock complex. The interesting geologic features of this area, including blockfaulted scarps and a volcanic cone, as well as its terrain, ephemeral lakes and outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation make it an exceptional potential addition to the Wilderness System. We are shocked at the recommendation of only 780 of its 24,130 areas for wilderness designation, even assuming they would be joined to formal wilderness located in the Sheldon Antelope National Wildlife Refuge.

Massacre Rim. This area, with its outstanding archeological resources, massive junipers, springs, elevation and great size, would make an outstanding addition to the National Wilderness System and, moreover, would benefit from affirmative management. We are extremely dismayed by the recommendation for wilderness designation of only 23,260 acres of its 110,000 acre total. We urge that at least 48,730 acres of environmentally sensitive wild lands be added to the acreage you have already found suitable in order to protect values that would otherwise be lost forever.

Tunnison Mountain WSA. This beautiful area offers outstanding and rare recreational opportunities in addition to the "traditional" wilderness opportunities: scenic Willow Creek with its excellent trout fishing and ponderosa pine/juniper woodlands; the panoramic views of the region from the mountain's top, and cultural resources. We applaud your decision to recommend 7,660 of its 20,650 acres, but are concerned about the remainder.

Eagle Head/Dry Valley Rim WSA. This 16 mile long mountain range possess unique values. Its eastern escarpment, with its deep rocky canyons, including beautiful Red Rock Canyon, and golden eagle and prairie falcon nests, provides great hiking and birding for recreationists along with solitude and other primitive pastimes, while its uplands are home for wild horses, pronghorn antelope and deer. We agree that 52,530 acres are worthy of wilderness preservation, but are worried about the remainder of the WSA that was not recommended -- particularly the uplands where off-road vehicles are having adverse impacts.

Skedaddle Mountains WSA. This area's recreational, wildlife, scenic and wilderness values are of the highest quality: its falcons and eagles, wild horses, lush riparian areas and aspen groves, spring wildflowers, solitude and topographic features provide great hiking, camping, birding and climbing opportunities. The benefits of including this WSA in the Wilderness System are priceless and have been documented in BLM's own study documents -- unlike the adverse effects it has recently been alleged such designation could have on the Army Depot at Herlong, California.

Wall Canyon WSA. We are shocked at the failure to recommend any of this area for wilderness -- especially in light of the fact that, in its 28,000 acre pristine core, there are concededly no conflicts with grazing, mining or ORVs. Its two desert creeks -- one of which supports a unique fish species -- and their deep canyons, its topography, varied vegetation, petrified "meta-sequoia" deposits and significant wildlife habitat all need and deserve the protection wilderness designation would bring. In addition, the area provides genuinely outstanding opportunities for recreation and solitude, as recognized by the Bureau in its 1979 wilderness inventory. We strenuously urge you to recommend at least this WSA's core for wilderness preservation.

Thank you in advance for considering these comments. The Susanville District has been truly blessed with exceptional wilderness areas deserving of permanent recognition and protection. We are counting on you to manage them carefully to protect all their myriad values, including their irreplaceable wilderness value, pending Congressional designation and thereafter.

Sincerely,

Johanna Wald

Johanna H. Wald

THE CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION OF CALIFORNIA NATIVE FLORA

582 Euclid Avenue
Berkeley, California 94708

June 4, 1985

Rex Cleary, District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
705 Hall Street
Susanville, California 96130

Dear Mr. Cleary:

The California Native Plant Society supports the status of wilderness for

Skedaddle Mountains.

We urge you to keep the entire 63,790 acres in wilderness, and that you make no deletions prior to the expected action of Congress. We further urge that the wilderness values be carefully protected.

Sincerely,

Jean Jenny

Mrs. Jean Jenny
Public Lands Coordinator

Dept. of Interior
RECEIVED
JUN 14 1985
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
SUSANVILLE, CALIFORNIA

JUNE 13 '77

Dept. of Interior
RECEIVED
JUN 17 1977
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

DISTRICT MANAGER
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

THIS LETTER IS IN REGARD TO THE 13 WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS (WSA'S) IN NORTHEASTERN CALIF AND NORTHWESTERN NEVADA

248-1 I JUST WANTED TO LET YOU KNOW I SUPPORT ALTERNATIVE I - THE ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE ALSO THE SKEDADDLE - BUFFALO COMPLEX OF WSA'S SHOULD BE STUDIED AS ONE UNIT - SINCE THE SIX AREAS - FIVE OF THEM HAVE ONLY A DIRT ROAD SEPARATING THEM. ANOTHER POINT IS THAT WHAT MATTERS IN DESIGNATED A WILDERNESS IS WHAT'S INSIDE THE BOUNDARY, NOT SIGHTS AND SOUNDS OUTSIDE THE AREA. ONE FINAL POINT IS THAT NOT BEING ABLE TO CONTROL OFF ROAD VEHICLES IS NOT A VERY GOOD REASON TO OPPOSE ESTABLISHING WILDERNESS AREAS

THANKS FOR YOUR TIME.

DAVID G HANEY
R1, BOX 56M
LAKE ISABELLA, CALIF 93240

Response to Letter No. 248

248-1 While an alternative that specifically deals with these 5 WSAs as a complex was not developed for the EIS, the all wilderness alternatives for each WSA would result in wilderness management for the entire area. The Smoke Creek Ranch Road separates Skedaddle and Dry Valley Rim WSA's from Five Springs and Twin Peaks WSA's. This road is a gravel and dirt county road regularly maintained for travel speeds up to 50 miles per hour. Other roads separating the Skedaddle, Dry Valley Rim, Five Springs, Twin Peaks and Buffalo Hills WSA's are roads that have been improved and maintained by mechanical means to insure relatively regular and continuous use. These roads meet the definition of a road established during the BLM wilderness inventory and therefore resulted in the individual WSAs rather than a complex being presented in the EIS.

SIERRA CLUB - REDWOOD CHAPTER

P. O. Box 466, Santa Rosa, Ca. 95402

SIERRA CLUB - REDWOOD CHAPTER
CONSERVATION COMMITTEE
Ron Guenther
29900 Highway 20
Fort Bragg, California 95437

Dept. of Interior
RECEIVED
JUN 17 1985
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
SUSANVILLE, CALIFORNIA

June 13, 1985

District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
P.O. Box 1090
Susanville, California 96130

Northeastern California Wilderness Study

Dear Sir:

The Sierra Club Redwood Chapter is deeply concerned for the BLM Wilderness Study and Designation Program. There are many wilderness users among our members, and many more who appreciate the necessity for preserving our dwindling wilderness resources. We wish to go on record with these recommendations for the six Lassen County BLM Wilderness Study Areas:

1) We support and recommend adoption of Alternative I, the all wilderness alternative.

249-1 2) We recommend that the existing primitive road system be closed, and the Skedaddle-Buffalo complex of wilderness study areas be studied as one unit.

249-2 3) We urge BLM to recognize that wilderness values are determined by wilderness characteristics and resources inside a WSA boundary, not by sights and sounds outside the area. Also, we have found that these outside sights and sounds often enhance the feeling of wilderness within the WSA.

249-3 4) We urge BLM to recognize that its inability to control off-road vehicles is not a valid reason for opposing wilderness designation.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns. Please keep us informed of progress in designating Northeastern California wilderness.

Ron Guenther
Conservation Chair
For the Sierra Club - Redwood Chapter

Copy to: Chapter Secretary

Response to Letter No. 249

249-1 Regarding boundary roads between the Skedaddle and Buffalo Hills WSA's, see Response 248-1. Consideration of a Skedaddle-Buffalo Hills wilderness complex was addressed in the All Wilderness alternatives.

249-2 Regarding outside sights and sounds see Response No. 23-3.

249-3 Regarding manageability of off-road vehicles see Response No. 23-3.

257
RECEIVED
SUSANVILLE DISTRICT
JUN 17 1985

Ferret
Exploration
Company, Inc.

Suite 300
1800 Glenarm Place
Denver, Colorado 80202

ARCH
FORESTRY
MINERALS
RANGE
REALTY
RECREATION
T & E
WATERSHED
WILDERNESS
WILDLIFE

ACTION	ROUTING & INITIAL	
		DIST MGR
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		PLG & ENV
		PO
		RESOURCES
		ADMIN
		OPER
		EAGLE LAKE OFFICE
		ALTURAS OFFICE
		CEDARVILLE OFFICE

1. Information
2. Lead Action
3. Provide Input
Review & Surname
5. Comments
6. See me
7. File
8. Send Copy

June 11, 1985

Bureau of Land Management
District Office
P.O. Box 1090
Susanville, Ca 96130

Dear Sirs:

Ferret Exploration Company, as an active operator in northwest Nevada wishes to provide the following information with regard to potential wilderness recommendations for the Susanville District Wilderness Study Areas. It is our feeling that the mineral potential assessments for the WSAs within the Cedarville Resource Area have not recognized the true potential there. We are presently in the process of putting into production what is expected to be a substantial precious metals mine near Hog Ranch Mountain (T37, 38N, R22, 23E). Work has been ongoing on this project since 1979 and strong potential exists for over 1 million ounces of gold on the property. Exploration will continue for a number of years concurrent with a mine expected to be producing in 1986. Mineralization is known to extend over an
257-1 area some 5 miles in length (including competitor activity to the east of our property).

During 1982 and 1983 Ferret was engaged in reconnaissance sampling of a large area including portions of northwest Nevada and southern Oregon attempting to locate additional mineralized areas. This sampling included areas within the Cedarville Resource Area WSA's. One very promising area was located in the Calico Mts. within a Winnemucca District WSA. Work has continued on that project to the present. Additional anomalies have been noted in the four High Rock WSA's (913, 913A, 913B, 914) as well as the Sheldon Antelope Range (mostly closed to mineral entry). The Massacre Rim WSA(1014) has only limited exposure of non-basaltic rocks at surface and thus most expected mineral deposits would be concealed. The Lone Pine Mercury District as well as the Bald Mountain area (withdrawn from Mineral entry) provide attractive targets that may extend to the south beneath the surface basalt cover onto the Massacre Rim WSA. The Lone Pine Area is presently under claim by a competitor company. We don't have any sampling data from the Sheldon Contiguous WSA (1012). We have limited data from the Wall Canyon WSA (805) and no data on any of the Eagle Lake WSA's. While we consider the specific results of this reconnaissance to be proprietary information, wilderness designation for the affected areas would halt further efforts towards mineral developments. Designation of the Sheldon Antelope Range has already blocked much potential.

Since the discovery of our Hog Ranch deposits a number of competitor companies have initiated exploration programs for precious metals deposits in the area. Development of new exploration ideas, techniques and geologic knowledge has recently transformed this portion of Nevada into a highly attractive area of exploration potential. We recommend against wilderness designation for any of the WSA's but most particularly the four High Rock WSA's.

-1
nt.

Contrary to some laymen's opinions economic geologists are acutely aware that all mining districts have not been discovered. Geologic exploration is an evolving science. Geophysics and geochemistry are only tools that may help at times. It may be several years before another major deposit is found in northwest Nevada. We should not allow the best prospecting areas to be declared off limits to exploration by wilderness designation.

Sincerely,

Siegfried Holso

Siegfried Holso
Senior Geologist

SH/mb

Response to Letter No. 257

257-1 It should be made clear that only NICOR and Tenneco (Houston Oil and Gas) have active claim blocks in any of the 7 WSA's in Surprise (formerly Cedarville) Resource Area. Both companies have been allowed to conduct limited exploration drilling that met non-impairment criteria under the Bureau's Interim Management Policy at three different locations in three different WSA's. Paul Noland, Noranda, Ferret, Idaho Mining and Idaho Energy have claims near WSA's.

All of the oil and gas lease acreage has been terminated except for one lease that includes about 80 acres of WSA 913.

The U.S. Geological Survey and U.S. Bureau of Mines are conducting a survey of the mineral potential of all the suitable portions of the WSA's. Their report will address geophysical, geochemical and geological aspects of the areas along with a survey of all mining claims, exploration activities and mining districts. Their combined report will be part of the body of information that will be reviewed before a final recommendation goes to the Secretary of the Interior and the President.

The mineral representative for the Surprise Resource Area Technical Review Team is a highly respected professional lobbyist who conducted extensive consultations with members of the minerals industry. His input was considered throughout the recommendations.

It should be pointed out that the mineral classification and level of confidence scheme summary for East Fork High Rock Canyon has been changed from low to moderate favorability (3C) for accumulation of mineral resources. This favorability primarily applies to the non-suitable areas on the eastern edge of the WSA.

ATE OF CALIFORNIA—OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

GEORGE DEUKMEJIAN, Governor

OFFICE OF PLANNING AND RESEARCH
1400 TENTH STREET
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814

916/323-7480

Dept. of Interior
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1985
BUREAU OF LAND
MANAGEMENT
SUSANVILLE, CALIFORNIA

TO: Mr. John Bosworth
Bureau of Land Management
Post Office Box 1090
Susanville, CA 96130

DATE: June 12, 1985

FROM: Office of Planning and Research
State Clearinghouse

RE: SCH 85031806---Draft EIS, Eagle Lake, Cedarville Wilderness

As the designated Single Point of Contact for the State of California, pursuant to Executive Order 12372, the Office of Planning and Research transmits attached comments as the State Process Recommedation.

Initiation of the "accommodate or explain" response by your agency, therefore, is in effect.

Sincerely,

Huston T. Carlyle, Jr.
Director, Office of Planning and Research

Resources Building
1416 Ninth Street
95814

(916) 445-5656

GEORGE DEUKMEJIAN
GOVERNOR OF
CALIFORNIA

Department of Conservation
Department of Fish and Game
Department of Forestry
Department of Boating and Waterways
Department of Parks and Recreation
Department of Water Resources
California Conservation Corps

THE RESOURCES AGENCY OF CALIFORNIA
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

Air Resources Board
California Coastal Commission
California Waste Management Board
Colorado River Board
Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission
San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission
State Coastal Conservancy
State Lands Commission
State Reclamation Board
State Water Resources Control Board
Regional Water Quality Control Boards

Mr. John Bosworth
Bureau of Land Management
Post Office 1090
Susanville, CA 96130

June 12, 1985

Dear Mr. Bosworth:

The State has reviewed the Eagle Lake/Cedarville Wilderness Draft EIS, submitted through the Office of Planning and Research. Review was coordinated with the State Lands Commission, Reclamation and Water Resources Control Boards, and Departments of Conservation, Fish and Game, Forestry, Parks and Recreation, Water Resources, and Health Services.

262-1 The Department of Fish and Game (DFG) supports the preferred alternative, provided that the reintroduction of bighorn sheep into the Skedaddle Mountain Wilderness Area is allowed. DFG has also provided numerous minor comments directly to you regarding this document.

262-2 The Department of Conservation comments that geologic and technical reports are referred to in the document, but are not listed in the References Section. The Department recommends that all references be properly cited in the text and included in the Final EIS bibliography.

The Department has also learned that the U.S. Geological Survey and U.S. Bureau of Mines are examining and evaluating most of the WSAs identified in this report for mineral resource potential. The Department, therefore, recommends that no formal action be taken regarding the designation of these WSAs until essential investigations are completed.

Questions regarding these comments may be directed to Robert Streitz, Division of Mines and Geology, (916) 322-3202.

Sincerely,

Charles K. Fellows
for Gordon F. Snow, Ph.D
Assistant Secretary for Resources

cc: Office of Planning and Research
1400 Tenth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
(SCH 85031806)

Response to Letter No. 262

262-1 Reintroduction of Big Horn Sheep into the Skedaddle Mountains would be allowed under wilderness. BLM Wilderness Management Policy, September, 1981, Chapter III section D.3 states:

> In some instances, wildlife species once native to the wilderness have been forced from their original habitat by the encroachment of human beings and human activities. To the extent that these factors can be altered or managed within the intent of the Wilderness Act, native species no longer established in the wilderness area may be reintroduced and managed as a part of the wilderness resource. Care must be exercised to be certain that the species is native. Such program will be addressed in the wilderness management plan.
>
> Management of established exotic species (e.g., chukar partridge, pheasant) not natural to an area may continue where they enhance the wilderness character of a particular wilderness. Introduction of new exotics will not be permitted. Coordination with State and Federal agencies should be established for control of undesirable exotic populations.

262-2 Additional references have been added.

JOHN P. BAKER
ATTORNEY AT LAW
207 SOUTH COURT STREET
P.O. BOX 1886
ALTURAS, CALIFORNIA 96101
TELEPHONE (916) 233-4431

RECEIVED
JUN 19 1985
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
SUSANVILLE, CALIFORNIA

June 17, 1985

Mr. Rex Cleary
District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
P. O. Box 1090
Susanville, CA 96130

RE: Bob Bunyard/Wilderness Study

Dear Rex:

Please consider this a comment, on behalf of Bob Bunyard, to the draft environmental impact statement containing the preliminary wilderness recommendations for the Eagle Lake/Cedarville study areas.

263-1 Although the TRT agreed and recommended that aerial gunning to control coyotes be allowed in the Little High Rock Canyon, Yellow Rock Canyon, High Rock Canyon, and East Fork High Rock Canyon proposed wilderness areas, this agreement and recommendation is not set forth in the EIS. BLM representatives who are involved in the decision-making process have confirmed to me that this was, in fact, the agreement and that the recommendation was inadvertantly omitted from the draft environmental impact statement but would be contained in the preliminary final environmental impact statement.

Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

JOHN P. BAKER

sr

cc: Mr. Bob Bunyard

Response to Letter No. 263

263-1 Predator control was considered as an issue but dropped from further analysis in the WSA's where sheep operations are conducted. The issue was dropped because the wilderness management policy allows predator control to continue as conducted under existing regulations which include aerial gunning. Toxicants would not be allowed. As no toxicants are currently being used and the toxicants available for use are not effective during the current periods of predator control, no future toxicant use would occur. Therefore, existing predator control activities would be allowed to continue whether or not the areas would be designated as wilderness.

June 16, 1985

District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
P.O. Box 1090
Susanville, CA 96130

Dear Sir,

With respect to your wilderness proposals for northeastern California, I wish to support Alternative I.

265-1 I find it particularly disturbing that you cite inability to control off-road vehicles as a reason to reject certain WSAs from consideration. The Susanville District has received $475,050 of California State tax monies for development of the Knoxville & Ft. Sage Mtns. ORV areas, predicated on the assumption that provision of legal areas of use will allow control of illegal use. Perhaps citing inability to control ORV use is an admission that the State is wasting its money on the Susanville District?

265-2 In addition, you cite external sights and sounds as reasons for rejecting certain WSAs. This is, of course, irrelevant, for otherwise there could be no wilderness at all. Perhaps that is your aim, but it is contrary to the law.

Sincerely,

H.G. Wilshire

H.G. Wilshire
1348 Isabelle Ave.
Mtn. View, CA 94040

Dept. of Interior
RECEIVED
JUN 1985
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
SUSANVILLE, CALIFORNIA

Response to Letter No. 265

265-1 BLM Susanville District has received preliminary approval from the State of California, Department of Parks and Recreation, Division of Off Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation to utilize $231,250 of state "Green Sticker" Funds (monies specific for off highway vehicle recreation) to develop a trailhead area, acquire trail easements and expand motorcycle trail riding opportunities in the Fort Sage Mountains. The Fort Sage Mountains do not contain any wilderness study areas. The Knoxville area is located in the BLM Ukiah District, not in the Susanville District. Green Sticker Funds approved for use in the Susanville District are tied to specific actions in the Fort Sage Mountains and are not intended for management of off road vehicles throughout the Susanville District.

Problems in controlling use of off road vehicles result from ineffective boundaries. We are recognizing that an impact will occur when the boundary of an alternative does not have the characteristics inherent in a manageable boundary. These characteristics are: 1. Does the boundary naturally restrict prohibited uses? 2. It is easily recognizable to the public? An ideal situation is a ridge line or stream channel. Manageable boundaries can do much to lessen the amount of time and resources you have to spend preventing or enforcing violations of the boundary. These resources can better be spent on producing good maps, maintaining trails and providing information and interpretation to the public.

In most cases, wilderness values in the open terrain are of lower caliber than in the areas recommended as suitable. The combination of locating definable manageable boundaries and lower wilderness values provided the basis for recommending most of the broad, open terrain unsuitable for wilderness designation.

265-2 In regard to outside sights and sounds see Response No. 23-3.

American Wilderness Alliance

7600 East Arapahoe Road / Suite 114 / Englewood, Colorado 80112 / (303) 771-0380

277

ARD OF TRUSTEES
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Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
Department

Dr. Wallace Stegner
Author

CUTIVE DIRECTOR
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"On the Wild Side" Newsletter
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Englewood, Colorado 80112

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1985
BUREAU OF LAND
MANAGEMENT
SUSANVILLE, CALIFORNIA

June 18, 1985

Mr. Rex Cleary, District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
705 Hall Street
Susanville, CA 96130

Dear Mr. Cleary:

On June 4, I wrote you in regard to some of our thoughts concerning the 13 BLM Wilderness Study Areas on your district. These views pertained chiefly to those portions of the WSAs in Nevada.

Please include these additional comments in the official record regarding the WSAs, Skeedaddle Mountains-Buffalo Hills Complex and Tunnison Mountain, in Lassen County, California.

Our California members have pointed out that the Skeedaddle Mountains-Buffalo Hills Complex offers an outstanding opportunity to designate some 350,000 acres of undeveloped BLM lands as a single unit of exceptional wilderness. Only dirt roads now separate this greater unit. We urge the BLM to close these roads and propose that the entire complex be designated as one wilderness. This would preserve a major area of BLM wildland--mountain, foothill and desert-type country--with its complement of plant and animal life in a wilderness setting. Such a proposal would not only benefit wildlife by protecting it from motorized harassment, but it would also support much quality wilderness hunting.

277-1

Moreover, it should be obvious that for 30 million Californians the demand for wilderness greatly exceeds the supply of established areas. This scarcity has required both U. S. Forest Service and National Park Service to ration wilderness use by permit and other means. The BLM has a unique opportunity now to recommend the designation of some large undeveloped areas under its jurisdiction to provide much of the needed wilderness, now and in the future. It should take advantage of this opportunity to act in the long-range public interest by recommending that approximately 350,000 acres in the Skeedaddle Mountain-Buffalo Hills Complex be established as one wilderness.

The BLM has incorrectly ruled out all but 24,000 acres of this major area for wilderness, partly on the basis of sights and sounds outside the complex. The Forest

277-2

Service, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Congress considered this matter over 20 years ago, and all agreed that sights and sounds outside an area should not determine whether an area qualified for a wilderness classification. The 1964 Wilderness Act contains no provision which defines wilderness by what is on the outside. Wilderness must be determined by that which is within the area. Otherwise, no area in the United States would qualify as wilderness, since all areas are subject to the sights and sounds of aircraft overhead and civilization on the outside perimeters. Besides, if the dirt roads in this complex are closed and the entire complex proposed for wilderness, wilderness users will not be subjected unduly to outside sights and sounds.

277-2 cOnt.

Further, the American Wilderness Alliance cannot agree that the BLM would be unable to prevent off-road vehicle use in the greater area. The BLM has the ability to prevent such use on any of the public lands it administers, if it desires to do so. Some clear identifications of boundary lines, a public information program--and a few summons for violators to visit the U. S. Magistrate would largely take care of the problem. Vehicle users have millions of acres of adjoining lands to overrun.

As for the Tunnison Mountain WSA, we see no justifiable reason for not recommending the entire 20,000 acre unit as wilderness.

Accordingly, we respectfully urge that the BLM adopt th . "all wilderness" alternative, Alternative I, for this group of WSAs.

Sincerely,

Clifton R. Merritt
Executive Director

CRM:dbh

Response to Letter No. 277

277-1 In regard to the Skedaddle-Buffalo Hills wilderness complex, see Response 248-1.

277-2 BLM is recommending 144,785 acres as suitable for wilderness in the Skedaddle, Dry Valley Rim and Twin Peaks WSA's. In regard to outside sight and sounds, see Response No. 23-3.

STATE OF NEVADA

RICHARD H. BRYAN
Governor

292

LINDA A. RYAN
Director

STATE OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
Capitol Complex
Carson City, Nevada 89710
(702) 885-4420

June 20, 1985

Dept. of Interior
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JUN 21 1985
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
SUSANVILLE, CALIFORNIA

Mr. C. Rex Cleary
District Manager
BLM-Susanville District Office
P.O. Box 1090
Susanville, California 96130

Re: SAI NV 85300067

Dear Mr. Cleary:

Enclosed is the Governor's Consensus Position on the preliminary wilderness recommendations as presented in the Draft EIS for the Eagle Lake-Cedarville Study Areas. Also attached are individual State agency comments. The agency comments are provided on an informational basis only and may not directly correspond to the Governor's position.

We would also like to express our appreciation to you and your staff for the briefing held for State agencies in April; we will be looking forward to reviewing the Final EIS when published.

Sincerely,

John B Walker

John B. Walker, Coordinator
State Clearinghouse, OCS/SPOC

JBW/ll
cc: Tim Hay, Governor's Office
Enclosure

STATE OF NEVADA

RICHARD H. BRYAN
Governor

LINDA A. RYAN
Director

STATE OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
Capitol Complex
Carson City, Nevada 89710
(702) 885-4420

June 20, 1985

Mr. C. Rex Cleary
District Manager
BLM-Susanville District Office
P.O. Box 1090
Susanville, California 96130

Re: Governor's Consensus Position on Wilderness, Draft EIS for the Eagle Lake-Cedarville Study Area.

Dear Mr. Cleary:

The State of Nevada has reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for proposed wilderness areas in the Susanville District of the Bureau of Land Management. The issues were many and complex, and are generally well presented in the document.

The State wishes to compliment the Bureau on the approach used in developing the preferred wilderness alternatives for the Eagle Lake-Cedarville Study Areas. We are aware of no other district which has so successfully brought together representatives of agencies from many jurisdictions and the various public interests spanning environmental, mining and livestock concerns. The development of the preferred alternatives by technical review teams involving representatives of these varied groups -- who were instructed to reach a consensus position -- is unprecedented. We note that the teams were able to arrive at consensus positions for all but one wilderness study area, and that those who participated on the teams still support those consensus positions today.

In reviewing the wilderness study areas, the State of Nevada is in agreement that areas of controversy remain. We are concerned about potential mineral conflicts in the Little High Rock Wilderness Study Area. We feel that the area has considerable mineral potential, and note that there is substantial

exploration occurring at the present time immediately adjacent to the proposed wilderness area. We will be waiting with interest to review the more detailed mineral review that will be done for this area.

Overall, based on information available to us at the present time, the State of Nevada does, however, support the preferred alternatives as developed by the consensus teams and presented in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

Sincerely,

John B Walker

For Linda A. Ryan
Director

LAR/ll

50th Anniversary
Nevada State Parks

Division
of
State
Parks

John Richardson
Administrator

Room 119
Nye Building
201 South Fall Street
Capitol Complex
Carson City
Nevada
89710

702/885-4370

Richard H. Bryan
Governor

A division of the
Department of Conservation
and Natural Resources

Roland D. Westergard
Director

John Walker
Office of Community Services
1100 East William, Suite 117
Carson City, Nevada 89710

Dear John:

The Nevada Division of State Parks is pleased to comment on the DEIS, Eagle Lake-Cedarville Preliminary Wilderness Recommendations, SAI NV#85300067.

292-1 The Division prefers Alternative VI, which appears to be the most manageable of all of the alternatives. However, we do recommend one modification. The boundaries for High Rock and Little High Rock Canyon Wilderness Areas should be extended to the road that runs between the two areas. The road would still provide a travel corridor between the two areas. But, the most scenic areas of the canyons would be protected from encroaching vehicle traffic that would otherwise have access to the top of the canyon walls.

Should you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,

John Richardson
Administrator

Steve Weaver

By: Steve Weaver
Assistant Administrator

SW:ew
801.6b(9)

RICHARD H. BRYAN
Governor

STATE OF NEVADA

ROLAND D. WESTERGARD
State Historic Preservation Officer

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES

DIVISION OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND ARCHEOLOGY
201 S. Fall Street
Capitol Complex
Carson City, Nevada 89710
(702) 885-5138

June 4, 1985

MEMORANDUM

TO: John Walker, Office of Community Services

FROM: Alice M. Becker, Staff Archeologist *Alice M. Becker*

SUBJECT: DEIS, EAGLE LAKE CEDARVILLE PRELIMINARY WILDERNESS RECOMMENDATIONS, SAI NV #85300067.

The Division has reviewed the document. In general, we were pleased to note the inclusion of archeologists on the Technical Review Team and the consideration of cultural resources in the selection of alternatives. We have no comments, in general, regarding the selection of the preferred alternative, except in reference to Table 2-1 (page 2-5), the implication of wilderness designation on cultural resources. The DEIS quotes a portion of the Wilderness Management Policy prepared by BLM (September 1981). It should be made clear, however, that the Policy also addresses the need to satisfy BLM's obligations under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and 36 CFR Part 800. A decision to allow historic or prehistoric structures to deteriorate naturally is a Federal undertaking which will affect the resources. Therefore, if identified resources eligible for the Register are observed deteriorating, the BLM, through the consultation process, must determine a course of action to satisfactorily mitigate adverse effects. This statement should be included in the FEIS. 292-2

More specifically, the Division notes that Yellow Rock Canyon, Five Springs, Buffalo Hills, Wall Canyon WSA's all contain significant historic and archeological properties. If not recommended as WSA's, the BLM should develop alternative programs to protect these sites as they have been subject to increased acts of vandalism and illegal collecting during the last few years.

If you have any questions regarding these comments, please call us.

AMB/de

RICHARD H. BRYAN
Governor

STATE OF NEVADA

RICHARD L. REYBURN
Director

DEPARTMENT OF MINERALS
400 W. King Street, Suite 106
Carson City, Nevada 89710
(702) 885-5050

June 3, 1985

DEIS, Eagle Lake Cedarville-Preliminary Wilderness Recommendations
SAI NV #85300067

The Nevada Department of Minerals appreciates the opportunity to comment on the DEIS, Eagle Lake Cedarville-Preliminary Wilderness Recommendations. The Technical Review Team process seems to be a good method for providing the BLM with well rounded input.

We offer no comment on Tunnison Mountain, CA-020-311, as this area is located entirely within California.

We support alternative VI, the preferred alternative, for Five Springs, CA-020-609, recommending zero acres as suitable for wilderness. We do not oppose Alternative VI for Skedaddle, CA-020-612, recommending 160 acres in Nevada as suitable for wilderness.

292-3 With regard to Dry Valley Rim, CA-020-615, we are pleased that the 17,400 acres in the southern portion of the WSA have not been considered as suitable for wilderness in Alternative VI due to their potential geothermal value. The five placer claims mentioned on page 3-41 of the Draft EIS are actually located in T30N, R19E, Sections 7 and 18, and not T29N, as stated. Even though these five claims are not presently developed does not mean they should never be developed. There is already a cherrystemmed road in the area of these claims, and we feel these claims are not suitable for wilderness designation. We would not oppose Alternative VI for Dry Valley Rim if the cherrystemming were expanded in include the placer claims.

We support Alternative VI for Buffalo Hills, CA-020-619, recommending zero acres as suitable for wilderness.

We find nothing objectionable to Alternative VI for Twin Peaks, CA-020-619A, recommending 47,270 acres as suitable for wilderness designation since there are no known mineralized areas or mining claims in this WSA.

We support Alternative VI for Wall Canyon, CA-020-805, recommending zero acres as suitable for wilderness.

We believe little High Rock Canyon, NV-020-008, has a vast potential for economic mineral recovery and are therefore opposed to any wilderness designation in this area. Numerous groups have claim blocks adjoining the area including

O-3738

NICOR, Tenneco Minerals, Paul Noland, Noranda Exploration, Ferret Exploration and Idaho Mining. The geology adjoining the area is similar to the geology within the area.

Noranda and Ferret have a joint venture block of more than 440 claims in T37 and 38N, R22 and 23E. Mr. Ralph Barnard, Vice President of Ferret Exploration (oral communication, 5/15/84) stated that the claim block currently has an average assay of 0.08 ounces of gold per ton within 100 feet of the surface, based on tests from 140 exploration drill holes. Mr. Barnard estimates there are 200,000 ounces of gold present in the deposit with a possibility of more.

Tenneco Minerals has a block of 62 claims located just west of the WSA. According to Mr. Jeff Wilson, Regional Exploration Manager, Tenneco believes this area has an excellent potential for gold based on some drilling. Tenneco plans to do more drilling this season. Mr. Wilson (oral communication 5/8/85) believes that this mineral trend could continue into the WSA, since the geologic environment is so similar.

The historic Leadville Mining District, located a few miles southwest of the Little High Rock Canyon boundary, is the largest producer of lead and silver in Washoe County. By the year 1966, the following production of minerals was noted:

135	ounces	of gold
1,337,423	"	" silver
197,778	pounds	" copper
4,909,847	"	" lead
101,141	"	" zinc

(Source: NV Bureau of Mines & Geology, Bulletin 70)

The southeastern portion of Little High Rock Canyon also has geothermal potential.

We support Alternative VI for Yellow Rock Canyon, CA-020-913A, recommending zero acres suitable for wilderness.

For High Rock Canyon, CA-020-913B, and East Fork High Rock Canyon, NV-020-006A, we believe the area is too unexplored to adequately assess the mineral potential. Both uranium and mercury are present in the volcanic caprock through these WSA's and both are good indicators of other types of mineralization. For High Rock Canyon and east Fork High Rock Canyon, we would favor designation as an Area of Critical Environmental Consideration (ACEC) rather than any of the land being designated as wilderness.

For the Massacre Rim, CA-020-1013, there are no mineral deposits or claims in the 23,260 acres deemed suitable for wilderness designation under Alternative VI; however, this area is too unexplored to say there is no mineral potential. In view of this, we would favor designation as an ACEC rather than wilderness.

We support Alternative VI for the Sheldon Contiguous, CA-020-1012, recommending 780 acres as suitable for wilderness designation.

If you have any questions regarding this response, please contact this office.

DD:wf

Response to Letter No. 292

292-1 The boundaries were consciously moved back from the 913 and 913B WSA's to provide boundaries free from intentional or inadvertent vehicle trespass. The existing ways which radiate from the boundary road will continue to be used by the public. The proposed boundaries are designed to exclude the ways, and thus eliminate vehicle problems with wilderness visitors..

292-2 Table 2-1 has been deleted in the Final EIS. The BLM will protect cultural resources with or without wilderness designation as per requirements of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act and the Historic Preservation Act. BLM will continue to cooperate with State Historic Preservation Officers to identify and prioritize which areas will have Cultural Resource Management Plans written on them. As part of this cooperation BLM will work to determine a course of action to satisfactorily mitigate adverse effects of natural deterioration on federal register eligible historic and prehistoric structures.

292-3 The location of five placer claims in T30N., R19E., Section 7 and 8 have been corrected in the Final EIS. If a determination is made that claims have valid existing rights they could be developed. The cherrystem road to the claims is available for access if the claims were developed as the cherrystem road is outside the WSA boundary. A separate mineral evaluation by the Bureau of Mines and U.S. Geological Survey will be completed prior to a final recommendation being made to Congress.

Dept. of Interior
RECEIVED
JUN 21 1985
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
SUSANVILLE, CALIFORNIA

293

District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
P.O. Box 1090
Susanville, Cal. 96130

June 20, 1985

Comments concerning the EAGLE LAKE*CEDARVILLE STUDY AREAS, DEIS.

Dear Sir:

There has been much time, energy and money spent in preparing this DEIS and I wish to thank the Technical Review Team for their participation.

In tabels 4-1 thru 4-13, pages 4-138 thru 4-171, if the BLM's goal was to make these Tables difficult to use by leaving the resource catagories off of the odd numbered pages, you achieved that goal. The same comment applies to Table 2-2, page 2-93.

The BLM was inconsistant in providing tables for all WSAs in Chapter 3. Under livestock grazing tables were provided for WSA's 311,609,612,615,619, and 619A only. Then these tables were of little use as they showed the AMUs for the entire allotment and not for the percent of WSA used.

The DEIS is highly lacking in information on range condition, forage allotment, production and use, land treatment projects, riparian and aquatic conditions and projects, wildlife populations and habitat, and the economy.

What is the current ecological condition of each WSA? What is being done to improve the ecological of these areas?

The DEIS does not show the current forage production, the long term potential, how it is allotted or used. Is sufficient allotment made for wildlife, both game and non-game? What are the conditions in the areas of forage overlap? What is the production level of all non-competative forage?

293-1 What land treatment projects are planned for the next 20 years? How many acres in each WSA, if any, are planned for brush control only, by burning, chaining or spraying? How many acres for brush control and seeding or seeding only?

What are the current conditions of the riparian and aquatic zones or areas? What are their long term potential? How many and what kind of improvement or enhancement projects are planned in these areas?

What are the current populations of wild horses, antelope, and deer in each WSA? How much of their critical habitat do the WSA's contain? Although wildlife habitat management plans have been prepared for parts of some WSAs the DEIS is not complete without this information.

What would designation or non-designation of wilderness areas
-2 have on the local economy? Would jobs be created or lost in the livestock industry? If so how many? Would permnant or part time jobs increase in recreation or recreation support enterprises?

Maps showing present vegetation, ecological conditions, wildlife habitats and critical range, and visual resource management classes would been very helpful in reviewing and evaluating this DEIS.

It is stated on page 4-137 that, "Cultural resource sites are non-renewable resources." This statement is far from the truth.
293-3 The backpacker's camp site along a wilderness trail, Harry Truman's cabin at Spirit Lake, Three Mile Island, abandon farm and ranch buildings, and the thousands of sanitary land fills of the 1980's will be the culture resource sites of the year 2580.

Page 1-3, step 5 states, "Because wilderness designation is the overriding issue...." In this DEIS 'Wilderness Designation' is not an overriding issue. The consideration of Wilderness Designation may be an overriding issue. None of the areas have been designated.

Page 1-3, step 8 states, "The Bureau Director then reviews and
293-3A CONCURS and files the EIS with the Department of Interior." This states that the Bureau Director will 'Rubber-Stamp' the Land managers decision. I sincerely hope that this is not standard Bureau Policy.

Page 1-4, last paragraph under scoping, states, "...five issues
-4 cited above..." Yet only three issues are listed. What are the other two?

Page 1-4, Criterion No.1.d.(3) states, "Balancing the geographic distribution of wilderness areas." The BLMs proposal in this DEIS IS NOT to balance the geographic distribution of wilderness areas. The BLMs proposal is to bunch nine wilderness areas in a long narrow row, from north to south.

Page 1-5, criterion No.2, states, "The area must be capable of being effectively managed to preserve its wilderness chacter over the long term." The term effectively manage is not to be found in the Wilderness Act PL88-577, the Federal Land Policy and Management
293-5 Act, PL94-579 or in the Wilderness Management Policy handbook. Section 603 of PL94-579 states, "The Secretary shall continue to manage such lands according to his authority under this Act and other applicable laws in a manner so as not to impair the suitability of such areas for preservation as wilderness." This law does not say 'Effectively Mannage'. It is the mandate of the people through Congress and in cooperation with the BLM, that the BLM MANAGE all public lands for their intended use. To do otherwise is to MISMANAGE those lands.

Several questions come to mind concerning the Technical Review Team (TRT) process. Page 1-7 & 1-8 states, "It (TRT) was used as a tool to lessen the chance of polarization of interest groups and provide the Bureau with better quality public input for decision making purposes."---"The Stewardship Committee requested that all recommendations from the teams must be agreed upon by concensus (sic). This meant that no recommendations would be forwarded without unanimous agreement from all team members."----"Team member selection was accomplished by first soliciting nominations from user groups, agencies, and KEY INDIVIDUALS."

293-6

In BLM jargon concensus(sic) and unanimous may mean the same thing. My Random House dictionary defines: 'CONSENSUS 1.general agreement or harmony. 2. Majority of opinion. ---UNANIMOUS 1. being in complete agreement. 2. showing complete agreement.'

Can it be shown that the TRT was not polarized from the start? If it was not polarized, what tactics were used to get the TRT to reach complete agreement on ALL issues of twelve of the thirteen WSAs? Was one WSA not agreed upon to show the public that the system was working?

Who were these KEY individuals solicited for nonimation to TRT? Were they individuals known to rubber-stamp BLM policies?

WSAs UNDER the PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

Tunnison Mountain, WSA CA-020-311.

"The northern portion of the WSA excluding the private inholdings, is a long narrow ridge approximately 2½ miles in width. Management capability to provide opportunities for solitude is limited within such a narrow area."(p.2-75).

Of the 7,660 acres proposed for wilderness designation over 50% is less than 2½ miles wide, therefore would not provide opportunities for solitude.

"Area contains over 5,000 acres, provides GOOD opportunities for solitude and primative recreation."(p.2-94). Note that this WSA does not have outstanding opportunities as called for in PL88-577 and PL94-579.

293-6A

The boundary of a possible trans-sierra utility corridor lies within the southern area of the WSA and approximately 1,000 acres of the WSA proposed for designation is within that utility corridor.

293-7

This WSA is not scenic and is dominated by monotone colors and textures of Class "C" quality. There is some Class "A"&"B" scenery along Willow Creek which is both inside and outside of the southern boundary of the WSA.

I request that the entire 20,650 acres of this WSA be declared non-suitable for wilderness designation.

SKEDADDLE MOUNTAIN, WSA CA-020-612.

The 37,240 acres proposed for wilderness designation is really more like three areas than one. That area north of Skedadale Creek, in Range 17 East, is about 5½ miles long and averages less than two miles wide, and contains a little over 6,000 acres. There is a narrow corridor less than three-fourths of a mile wide connecting this area with the rest of the WSA.

A triangular like area south of Skedaddle Creek in T29N, R17E, that is about 5½ miles long on the south base and about 5 miles on the east leg, which covers about 14,000 acres. There is a corridor about 1½ miles wide that connects this area with the rest of the WSA.

The third area is rectangular in shape, mostly in Range 16 East. This area is about eight miles long and three miles wide which contains about 15,000 acres.

293-8 Over 10,000 acres of the WSA proposed for wilderness fall within the boundaries of the possible trans-sierra utility corridor, as shown on Map 3-7.

293-9 There are two parcels of private inholdings within the WSA area that is proposed for designation, Map 2-8 & others, not just one as stated on pages 2-77 and 4-143.

293-9A The DEIS states that the total visitor days in the WSA to be 4,500, with hunters accounting for 4,200 of those, leaving 300 days for all other recreational users. Yet the DEIS states that a one day motorcycle event usually draws up to 400 visitors. Seems that the estimates are rather loose.

The configuration of the proposed area makes it unmanageable as a unit for wilderness use.

The area will require extra police protection every year, forever, to protect wilderness chacteristics. This cost will be to high for the value received.

The area will have high adverse impacts to the wilderness experience from the nearby Sierra Army Depot. Chemical fall-out from those impacts could be hazardous to a wilderness users health during and after the fall-out periods.

Needed security access would be hampered by wilderness designation.

The expansive vistas over honey lake, honey lake valley and beyond to the Sierra escarpment and the volcanic peaks surrounding honey lake valley are outside of the WSA and will remain for visitor enjoyment without wilderness designation.

I request that the entire 63,881 acres of this WSA be eliminated from further wilderness review.

DRY VALLEY RIM, WSA CA-020-615.

"The suitable area in this alternative is for the most part managable. Distinctive physical features form most of the north, east, and south boundaries and where legal boundaries are used, the lines occur where physical terrain or lack of motorized use assure good manageability." ...."Occasional motorcycle trail riding through the suitable area would be difficult to control."(p.2-79).

The boundary lines for the suitable area as drawn on Map 2-11 do not follow distinctive features for the most part. These lines do not follow drainage bottoms, ridge lines or rims; instead, these boundary lines go up and down slopes, across drainages, ridges, and canyons.

The BLM and the TRT seems to have lost sight of the fact that each of the WSAs if designated will have to have a legally described
293-9B boundary, be it by legal subdivision lines, metes and bounds, the center line of a stream or drainage, the crest of a mountain range, or parallel to a given road.

Over 50% of the boundary lines for the suitable area of this WSA can not be legally defined without a metes and bounds survey. Both the BLM and the public users need to know the exact location of all boundary lines.

293-10 On page 3-42, IV. Wild Horses and Burros: near the bottom of the paragraph, the two terms NW½ are not legal subdivision terms. Should they read NW¼?

293-11 On page 2-99, the sixth line from the bottom of the page should read T30N,R17E, section 2 W½SW¼; not section 2 SW½SW½.

"Expansive vistas to the east overlook the Smoke Creek Desert." (p.3-37). ---"Precipitious, deep rimrock and talus canyons are common on the eastern 1/3 of the WSA....an almost sheer 1,000 to 1,500
293-12 foot rimrock wall is located along the eastern boundary."(p.3-39).

The Smoke Creek Desert is outside of the WSA and the rimrock wall is outside of the area recommended for wilderness designation. Designation is not needed for one to enjoy the use and beauty of the desert and these rock walls.

That area north of the south line of township 30 north and within the proposed suitable area of this WSA has the most potential for a wilderness area.

The area proposed for wilderness designation would need added police patrol for all years to come to protect the wilderness values. The benefits would not justify the added cost.

Unwanted motorcycle activities could not be controlled on a full time basis, causing loss of wilderness values.

The area has no high quality scenic values, being completely devoid of any Class "A" values.

The southern one-half of the WSA is subject to adverse conditions due to the proximity and activities of the Sierra Army Depot. I believe that the BLM and TRT have played down the adverse effects of the demolition activities at this Depot. While traveling U.S. High-
293-13 way 395, at least 20 miles from the demolition site, I have personally observed flames several hundred feet high and columns of smoke thousands of feet high. Because of wind drift the fallout of chemicals of unknown types could have a serious adverse impact to visitors of the areas.

Again let it be noted that it is the non-users of the areas that would have the WSAs locked-up through wilderness designation, (p.3-43).

I request that the entire 95,025 acres of this WSA be dropped from further consideration for wilderness designation.

TWIN PEAKS, WSA CA-020-619A.

The BLM and the TRT failed to look into the future in selecting the boundary for the proposed suitable area, of this WSA. They should have used the existing fence that crosses the WSA boundary northeast of Burro Mountain Pass in section 8, T.31N.,R.19E., and follow that fence to the center line of Buffalo Creek; follow Buffalo Creek north to the confluence with Willow Creek; then follow the center line of Willow Creek westerly to the WSA boundary at Mixie Flat. The south line of the suitable area is OK as shown along the south line of township 32 north. However that diagonal line going NW from the west end of the south line of the suitable area crosses some gentle sloping ground that receives heavy OHV use.

293-14

If the above suggested boundaries were used there would be very little adverse impact from the utility corridors as shown on Map 3-16. Also if the existing fence line were used thousands of dollars could be saved in survey costs, as the boundary could be posted without survey.

Conflicts with inholding land owners and 1260 acres of split estate is not conducive to wilderness designation.

The WSA is not a high quality scenic area as it has no Class "A" lands and the Class "B" quality is mostly along Buffalo and Smoke Creek Canyons, and most of Smoke Creek Canyon is outside of the area proposed as suitable for wilderness designation.

The record shows that the majority of those favoring wilderness designation are the non-users.

I request that the entire 91,405 acres of this WSA be withdrawn from further wilderness review.

In discussing the High Rock Complex, page 2-103, the DEIS states, "Wilderness designation would also allow an opportunity to explore wild horse management under natural conditions."

293-15

This statement is both vague and ambigious. Under wilderness designation there would be little or no change in the present management plan, for these wild horses. Would these wild horses spend 100% of their time within a wilderness designated area? What are natural conditions?

Once man starts manipulating the wild horses by gathering, culling, herding and fencing they no longer live under natural conditions. Being intermingled in a domestic livestock allotment is not a natural condition.

LITTLE HIGHROCK CANYON, WSA CA-020-913.

I am all for the reintroduction of Bighorn sheep in areas of sufficient size to sustain a viable population. I do not believe that the canyons and rims along Little Highrock and McConnel Canyons are of sufficient size to accomplish that goal.

293-16

I would endorse the 17,450 acres proposed as suitable for wilderness designation if it was not already under an ACEC designation. ACEC goals can not be reached under dual designation.

I request that all 52,893 acres of this WSA be dropped from further wilderness review.

HIGH ROCK CANYON, WSA CA-020-913B

It is very difficult to understand why the BLM and TRT proposes 12,180 acres of this WSA as suitable for wilderness designation, when the proposed area is a little over ten miles long from north to south and averages less than two miles wide east to west. 3-17

In WSA CA-020-311 the BLM and TRT considered an area 2½ miles wide as being too narrow for wilderness designation. Why the change in thinking and recommendations here?

Part of this WSA is under an ACEC designation, part is on the National Register of Historical Places and wilderness designation would put all or part of the WSA under triple designation and therefore unmanageable for its intended purposes.

The area proposed as suitable also has a proposed fence nearly five miles long, north to south, about mid-way east to west in the area. This would be a very severe adverse impact on such a narrow wilderness area. This fence is needed to manage the resources.

Most of the Class"A" scenery in this WSA is along High Rock Canyon, which is the eastern boundary and the eastern rim of the canyon is outside of the WSA, The remainder of the WSA is Class "C".

I request that the entire 34,317 acres of this WSA be removed from further wilderness rewiew.

EAST FORK HIGH ROCK CANYON, WSA CA-020-914.

I believe that the east boundary of this area proposed as suitable for wilderness could be improved if it would follow the existing fence, from the north, all the way along the Washoe-Humboldt county line, to the south end of the WSA.

Also near the center of the proposed north boundary, where it leaves the existing fence at the angle point in the Yellow Hills at elevation 6045, the boundary should go south along the crest of the ridge to elevation 6093, stay on the ridge crest down to the knoll at elevation 5822, continue south on the crest of the ridge to the vehicle way along Cottonwood Cree. There is a good location here to close off traffic into the proposed area, and then the boundary could parallel the way westward to the west boundary, as shown. 293-18

Part of this WSA is already designated as an ACEC, to designate the proposed suitable area as wilderness would make the ACEC areas impossible to manage for its goals and guide lines.

A WSA with 1,650 acres of split estate should not be proposed for wilderness as there is no gurantee that the government can acquire those rights. 293-19

Since the proposed area has illconcieved boundaries, contains private inholdings, and already has ACEC designated areas, and has a large amount of split estate lands, I request that the entire 52,000 acres be removed from further consideration of wilderness designation.

SHELDON CONTIGIOUS, WSA CA-020-1012.

Range, habitat and enviornment conducive to the general well being of the antelope populations of northwest Nevada can not be maintained while being locked-up under wilderness designation. -20

Placing the Sheldon National Antelope Refuge under dual designation would defete the purpose for which the Refuge was originally estableshed.

There is nothing wrong with making 780 acres of this WSA part of the Sheldon Refuge, but the Refuge should not be designated as a wilderness area.

MASSACRE RIM, WSA CA-020-1013.

This WSA probably best represents the Great Basin-High Desert ecosystem of the thirteen WSAs in this DEIS.

To maintain diversity and distribution in the national wilderness system, I endorse the 23,260 acres proposed, for inclusion in the NWPS.

A small adjustment to the south boundary of the proposed area would eliminate one private inholding and reduce the proposed area by about 280 acres, including the one private inholding of 40 acres.

As seen on Map 3-38, the 6200' contour touches the SW corner of the eastern most 40 acre private inholding. As seen on Map 2-33 the proposed boundary also nearly touches the SW corner of the 293-21 40 acre inholding. When the proposed boundary leaves the existing fence, to the west, and follows the rim along or near the 6200' contour, it should join the private inholding at the SW corner then follow north, east and south around the inholding to the SE corner of the 40 acre tract. From the SE corner it should go in an east southeast direction,across the flat, until it again intersects the rim near the 6200' contour.

Although this change puts part of the rim outside of the proposed area it still serves its purpose of deterring vehicular travel, and it creates amore uniform boundary.

How can the BLM and TRT justify recommending more than parts of two WSAs, out of this group of thirteen, for wilderness designation?

By the government's own definition, a WSA must either have outstanding opportunities for solitude or primative and unconfined 293-22 recreation.

What is outstanding? The government defines outstanding as:

1. Standing out among others of its kind; conspicious; prominent.
2. superior to others of its kind; distinguished; excellent.

There are probably nat any other WSAs being studied that are more alike in kind than these thirteen; yet the BLM and TRT are trying to tell us that parts of nine of these WSAs are superior to each other.

They have presented NO evidence that one WSA is outstanding over the others. There is not one statement in this DEIS that tell us why WSA 612 is outstanding over WSA 615, or why WSA 311 is outstanding over WSA 1013, or why any one WSA is outstanding over any other WSA.

This DEIS does not meet the letter of the law under the Wilderness Act or the Federal Land Policy and Management Act.

293-23 The BLM also does the public a great disservice by holding their public meetings or hearings so early in the comment periods, for receiving oral comments. These early meeting dates do not allow enough time to review the DEIS before the meetings are called. After the DEIS are issued, all meetings to receive oral comments should be held in the last ten days of the comment period.

Sincerely,

Frank Vaughn

Frank Vaughn
936 N. 7th
Lakeview, Or.
97630

Response to Letter No. 293

293-1 The DEIS is prepared to assess impacts of wilderness designation/non-designation on affected resources. Information on vegetation, wildlife, range and other resources was included where it was pertinent to the issues at hand. Additional details are not included because they have no bearing on the wilderness issue and have been treated in other Bureau planning efforts. The grazing related information is covered in great detail in four grazing issue EISs. Management actions are described in Chapter 2 for each alternative of each WSA that include projected range projects and use levels.

293-2 Based upon limited experience, we have determined that designation of wilderness would have no significant impacts on the local economy. This could mean that a few jobs may or may not be lost or created, but it is impossible to quantify.

293-3 While it is technically correct that new cultural sites are currently being created, they are not the same as the sites being lost. The cultural sites that exist in the WSAs represent specific cultures at various historic and prehistoric times, as such they are considered non-renewable.

293-3A The BLM Director will review and file the EIS upon his concurrence. If the Director does not concur the EIS would be remaned back to the BLM District for revision.

293-4 The entire issues section has been modified to address specific issues for each WSA.

293-5 Manageability concerns have been eliminated from the final EIS. Impacts of illegal ORV use have been documented as impacts on the wilderness value of solitude.

293-6 The TRT process uses unanimous consensus before any proposal is passed on as a recommendation. TRT members were recommended by representatives from the major interest groups. For example, the minerals interest were asked for someone who would represent their interests. The Bureau was not involved with who the minerals industry or any other user group recommended.

293-6A The BLM Wilderness Inventory determined that Tunnison Mountain contained all the requirements of the Wilderness Study Area (WSA) including outstanding opportunities for solitude.

293-7 The proposed utility corridor alignment through the southern end of the WSA shown on Map 3-1 is an approximation of the area under study by the utility industry for possible utility corridor development. Actual utility line development would require only a small portion of the 3.5 mile wide area identified on Map 3-1. Sufficient space for utility line construction is available through the recommended non-suitable area.

293-8 The utility corridor through the east side of the WSA is considered low priority by the utility industry. With the high priority northern alignment available for development through the recommended non-suitable area of the WSA, there would be little need for development of the eastern alignment and hence it's inclusion in the recommended suitable area. Minimal impacts to the utility industry are stated in the text.

293-9 Changes have been made in the final EIS to correct this error.

293-9A The motorcycle enduro event usually draws 100 to 200 riders and an equal number of spectators on public lands just outside the WSA. An error in the draft EIS stating that a portion of the enduro trail occurs within the WSA has been deleted to correct this error.

293-9B Boundaries identified on May 2-11 were developed to as a result of compromise between wilderness values and vehicle use. As such, boundaries were often located at break in slope areas rather than along legal boundaries, ridges crests or drainages. Other boundaries are located parallel to but set back from existing boundary roads or access ways. These boundaries were developed as the best mix between wilderness and other resource uses in the area. As such it was recognized that the boundaries will require metes and bounds survey and extensive signing. However, this was considered an acceptable trade-off when assessing the fact that all resource uses and interests represented on the TRT were in agreement over the boundary.

293-10 Two errors in the description have been corrected. The sentence now reads: Past trapping locations have been near the Skedaddle Dam T.29N. R.17E. Section 36, SE¼, ¼ mile inside the WSA boundary and ½ mile outside the WSA near Wild Horse Reservoir, T.30N. R.17E. Section 22, S½.

293-11 The text has been corrected to read: "Section 2 W½ of SW¼."

293-12 Dry Valley Rim lies within the recommended suitable area and is the precipitous 1000 to 1500 foot rimrock wall referred to in the text. Clarification has been added to note that the rim occurs within the eastern 1/3 of the WSA and not on the actual eastern boundary.

293-13 Sierra Army Depot demolition activities affecting air quality operate under a permit from the California Air Resources Control Board. The activities at the demolition area are in compliance with Class II air quality standards which apply throughout Lassen County, and as such, visitors to the WSA are not expected to be subject to hazardous fallout materials from demolition activities.

293-14 Surveying convenience or inconvenience was not the central issue in developing a suitable or unsuitable recommendation. Boundaries selected for the suitable portion of Twin Peaks WSA were developed by the Technical Review Team in consideration of wilderness qualities and other resource uses of the area. Field recognizable boundaries were of concern to the TRT and included where feasible. In some

cases however, the TRT agreed that boundaries that met the best combination of wilderness qualities and other resource uses would require metes and bounds surveys and field signing.

293-15 The comment regarding wilderness designation and wild horse management under natural conditions is ambiguous and has been deleted from the final EIS. WIld horse management will continue under wilderness designation.

293-16 Reintroduction of big horn sheep will occur only in areas where Nevada Division of Wildlife considers such reintroduction will be viable.

ACEC goals of wildlife protection and big horn reintroduction are fully compatible with wilderness management goals.

293-17 Topography on Tunnison's ridge like mountains does not afford high levels of isolation whereas the deep canyons of High Rock afford ample opportunities for isolation within an area of similar narrow width.

293-18 Revision of the boundary as recommended by Mr. Vaugh would not significantly change the impact of wilderness designation. The boundary as shown follows a drainage and is field recognizable and will effectively control vehicle traffic.

293-19 The landowner of the split estate lands has indicated a willingness to complete the exchange. Completion of an exchange was not done earlier because until recently the landowner did not have full control of the mineral rights. However, the existence of split estate lands within a WSA does not disqualify an area from wilderness designation. Surface management provides opportunities to protect wilderness values.

293-20 The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has already completed the study of the Sheldon for wilderness designation. The area is administratively endorsed by the Executive Branch for wilderness designation and is awaiting Congressional action. Wildlife management within the refuge can effectively be accomplished under wilderness management.

293-21 The boundary as shown in the draft EIS was selected because it follows the edge of the rim as an easily recognizable boundary. The existence of the private inholding is not considered to be in conflict with Proposed Action.

293-22 Through the BLM wilderness inventory process all 13 areas under study in this EIS were identified as having outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined type recreation. Recommendations for wilderness designation of portions of WSA's under study were based on a variety of criteria and procedure described in Chapter 1 of the draft EIS.

293-23 As the required public comment period is a 90 day period, hearings were held during the middle of this period to satisfy the requirement that at least 30 days ass between release of the document for review and the hearings and that at least 30 days remain after the hearing before close of the comment period.

COUNTY OF LASSEN

Courthouse
Susanville, CA 96130
(916) 257-8311

June 25, 1985

RECEIVED
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

C. Rex Cleary,
Susanville District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
P.O. Box 1090
Susanville, California 96130

Dear Rex:

The Lassen County Board of Supervisors has reviewed the Eagle Lake/Cedarville Wilderness Environmental Impact Statement dated October 1984 prepared by the Bureau of Land Management, Susanville District Office. This EIS analyzes six alternatives for each of 13 Wilderness Study Areas (WSA) within the District of which six WSA's are located wholly or partially within Lassen County. These comments will address the adequacy of the document in its recognition of relevant issues, consideration and analysis of the alternatives, reasonableness of conclusions, and the suitability of lands recommended for wilderness designation for those WSAs associated with Lassen County.

1. GENERAL ISSUES AND CONFLICTS ASSOCIATED WITH WILDERNESS DESIGNATIONS

The Lassen County Board of Supervisors is primarily concerned with the following issues and conflicts associated with the wilderness designations. It is apparent that these issues and conflicts were not given adequate and appropriate evaluation or consideration in the alternatives analysis or in the conclusions and recommendations that were developed.

298-1 a. Recognition of non-suitability of wilderness boundary in close proximity to Sierra Army Depot demolition area is inadequate. Although the proposed boundary meets the one mile Public Safety zone, earlier responses by Sierra Army Depot and the Lassen County Board of Supervisors to the TRT Recommendation for the Skedaddle WSA have expressed this boundary to be a deficient setback with respect to existing and likely future expanded ammunition demolition uses. The proximity of the wilderness boundary to the demolition area will subject wilderness users to non-suitable conflicts, i.e. loud noise from detonations, fugitive dust and smoke. The proposed wilderness boundary would clearly conflict with the definition of wilderness as contained in the "Wilderness Act," Public Law 88-577.

298-2 b. The EIS is inadequate in its consideration of Socio-Economic impacts. The EIS does not adequately address the impacts on existing, traditional social and economic uses and benefits that will result from changes from existing land use plans. Existing BLM Multiple Use Plans emphasize livestock, wildlife and recreational uses that generate higher revenues from consumptive uses, i.e. livestock grazing, hunting, commercial trapping, etc. Wilderness designations will eliminate and/or restrict

298-2 cont. such historic uses and emphasize non-consumptive wilderness activities, i.e. hiking, nature observation, etc., as would be required consistent with "Wilderness Management Policy."

298-3 c. The Wilderness Management Policy and the EIS does not provide specifics as to how wilderness areas shall be managed or effectively incorporate assurances that resource and management conflicts can be resolved. Code of Federal Regulations are limited to policies, criteria and guidelines. Although the EIS indicates that preexisting levels of 'grandfathered' uses can continue, economical means of maintenance and improvement of grazing allotments, livestock and wildlife watering facilities could be curtailed to prevent "wilderness degradation." Federal regulations pertaining to wilderness management after designations occur allow federal managers apparent wide discretion in interpreting and determining public interest and congressional intent in the administration of designated areas leaving doubt as to "which public" will be served.

298-4 d. The Wilderness Management Policy and the EIS appear to be silent to the necessary and desired extent of representative examples of natural Great Basin ecosystems containing unique special features to be recommended suitable for wilderness designations. The EIS preferred alternative recommends for wilderness designation areas considered by the BLM not to be high quality as wilderness (i.e. Tunnison Mountain, pg 2-57, and Dry Valley Rim, pg 2-61) as well as those considered by the BLM to contain such high values. The extent of areas recommended for wilderness designation in Lassen County, particularly in comparison to similar areas proposed for inclusion as wilderness throughout the Great Basin states is excessive. Many of the same factors that warrant their inclusion as wilderness also render them suitable and desirable for the multiple uses they are currently being used and managed for.

298-5 The EIS fails to address the individual and cummulative effects of user displacement that would result from the designation of all or portions of proposed wilderness areas if designated. Remaining non-designated user desirable areas will be required to accommodate increased traditional multiple use activities that would be unsuitable and not allowed in designated wilderness areas (i.e. OHV use, hunter access opportunities, normal non-wilderness grazing practices, commercial trapping, etc.). The EIS recognizes that historic uses such as reduction in hunting pressure as a result of access closures will occur in designated wilderness areas, however, the EIS does not address the environmental, manageability, and socio-economic impacts of user displacement to other non-designated areas.

2. <u>SUITABILITY OF WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS CONSIDERED IN LASSEN COUNTY/ANALYSIS OF ALTERNATIVES</u>

a. Tunnison Mountain WSA CA-020-311.
The BLM Preferred Alternative No. VI for Tunnison Mountain recommends

that 7,660 acres are suitable for wilderness and 12,990 acres of the WSA are non-suitable. The EIS finds in Alternative VI the conflicts to be minimal with "little change from present situation with wilderness designation" (pg 2-94), Alternative No. IV finds "in comparison with other WSAs under study, the Tunnison Mountain WSA was not considered to be high quality" (pg 2-57).

The conclusions of Alternative IV and V are appropriate in deeming the Tunnison WSA unsuitable for wilderness designation.

b. Five Springs WSA CA-020-609
The Board of Supervisors concurs with the BLM recommended Preferred Alternative that finds this WSA containing 48,460 acres non-suitable for wilderness recommendation.

c. Skedaddle Mountain WSA CA-020-612
The BLM Preferred Alternative for the Skedaddle Mountain WSA recommends 37,240 acres for wilderness designation and 26,550 acres to be designated Non-Wilderness.

298-5A Alternative No. VI does not reasonably address several critical factors of non-suitability. The most obvious and critical conflict occurs with the proximity of the southerly boundary of the proposed designated area to the Sierra Army Depot ammunition demolition area. The southerly facing slopes and ridges of the Amedee and Skedaddle Mountains if included in the designated area as proposed will subject wilderness users to sights and sounds of detonation activities that are extremely incompatible with user expectations of wilderness and with the definition of wilderness contained in Public Law 88-577. The EIS on page 2-97 states, "The Technical Review Team endorses wilderness suitability in the Skedaddle WSA provided that Sierra Army Depot Operations will not be altered by wilderness designation." The position of Sierra Army Depot has been that the Wilderness Area as proposed would be incompatible with existing uses and potential future expansion of its unique ammunition detonation facility. The continued integrity of the Sierra Army Depot is highly supported by the Lassen County Board of Supervisors and is critical to the economy of the County.

Other conflicts with respect to suitability of the Preferred Alternative relate to the closing of existing established vehicular access routes primarily along the northerly and easterly portions of the WSA. The closing of these existing access routes would seriously hamper the maintenance of grazing allotments, cause displacement of traditional hunting access and be difficult to manage. Alternative No. III respects the majority of significant resource and manageability conflicts relative to historic access and uses. The southerly portion of the Amedee Mountains are also appropriately excluded, however, the southerly boundary near the Sierra Army Depot property is grossly unsuitable for inclusion for the same reasons commented on regarding Alternative VI.

Considering the significant resource and manageability conflicts, particularly with respect to the proximity of the Sierra Army Depot, Alternative No. V, leaving the entire area Non-Wilderness is the only appropriate alternative. The area would be managed under the existing land use plan that emphasizes livestock, wildlife and recreational use of the area. Alternative No. V would also be consistent with the Lassen County General Plan - Wendel Area Plan Preferred Alternative policy directives which "ensure that existing public access opportunity to State and Federal lands are maintained and not diminished" and "ensure that public and private land uses and management policies do not conflict with or otherwise jeopardize the integrity of the Sierra Army Depot operation."

d. Dry Valley Rim WSA CA-020-615
The BLM recommended Preferred Alternative No. VI proposes 52,530 acres for wilderness and 42,495 acres to be designated Non-Wilderness. The westerly portion of this WSA lies in Lassen County with the remainder in Nevada.

The Preferred Alternative properly deletes the southerly most portion of the WSA due to impacts of "near daily drift of smoke and dust clouds over the area originating from Sierra Army Depot demolition site" (pg 2-99).

The designation of the suitable area recommended in Alternative No. VI will preclude a substantial amount of traditional hunter access routes. These access conflicts will be particularly severe if both the Dry Valley Rim and Skedaddle wilderness areas are designated as proposed. Such action would establish a larger overall wilderness complex by having adjacent suitable areas, with common boundaries (pg 2-98). The EIS does not address the impacts of displacement of traditional hunter access opportunities.

Alternative No. III provides a more realistic acknowledgement and mitigation of resource and manageability conflict by reduction of the recommended designated area. However, Alternative IV states "The Dry Valley Rim WSA was not considered to have enough high quality features to warrant its inclusion in the high quality wilderness alternative" (pg 2-61). The narrative of Alternative IV further states, "Non-designation of the entire WSA would result in minimal impairment of wilderness characteristics."

Analysis of these alternatives suggests the recommendation of Alternative IV or V to be appropriate for the Dry Valley Rim WSA as it relates to Lassen County.

e. Buffalo Hills WSA CA-020-619
The BLM recommends the entire WSA, 47, 315 acres located in Lassen and Washoe Counties as non-suitable for wilderness designation. The Board of Supervisors would concur with this recommendation as it effects Lassen County.

f. Twin Peaks WSA CA-020-619A
The BLM recommends that 54,970 acres of the Twin Peaks WSA be designated Wilderness with the remaining 36,435 acres left Non-Wilderness.

The Board of Supervisors finds the analysis contained in Alternative V (pgs 2-70 and 2-71) recommending no wilderness designation appropriate as it effects Lassen County. Statements from the EIS included in this alternative suggest non-designation should be preferred:

- o Provisions of the existing land use plan affecting the WSA are range, wildlife and culturally oriented and provide for: 1. development and implementation of allotment management plans to improve range condition for livestock and wildlife; 2. development and implementation of a habitat management plan for improving wildlife habitat and the fishery in Smoke Creek and; 3. protection and interpretation of archaeological values along Smoke Creek.

- o Non-designation of the entire WSA would result in little impairment of the wilderness characteristics.

3. DEFINITION OF ROADS AND WAYS

298-6 The proposed designations for extentive areas of wilderness will exclude established, regularly used access routes thereby significantly precluding and displacing traditional uses and opportunities. The closing of such access roads will diminish convenient and economical use by hunters, livestock operators maintaining allotments and other traditional users of these areas that regularly use and maintain these roads. The EIS does not address the access impacts that will occur in non-designated areas where use and demand will increase as a result of displacement.

298-7 The EIS improperly defines existing roads in many instances as ways. The EIS is not consistent with the BLM adopted definition of a "Road" contained on page 5 of the Wilderness Inventory Handbook:

"The word 'roadless' refers to the absence of roads which have been improved and maintained by mechanical means to insure relatively regular and continuous use. A way maintained solely by the passage of vehicles does not constitute a road."

"Improved and maintained"--Actions taken physically by man to keep the road open to vehicular traffic. "Improved" does not necessarily mean formal construction. "Maintained" does not necessarily mean annual maintenance.

"Mechanical means"--Use of hand or power machinery or tools.

"Relatively regular and continuous use"--Vehicular use which has

occurred and will continue to occur on a relatively regular basis. Examples are: access roads for equipment to maintain a stock water tank or other established water sources; access roads to maintained recreation sites or facilities; or access roads to mining claims.

4. TECHNICAL REVIEW TEAM REPRESENTATION

298-8 The Lassen County Board of Supervisors and the Sierra Army Depot have previously expressed the problem of lack of representation of the County and Army on the Technical Review Team. Lack of more direct consultation by the TRT seeking greater representation and input of effected users such as livestock operators and sportsmen have generated issues that could have been resolved earlier in the process.

In summary, the extent of the Wilderness Study Areas proposed for designation are too extensive. Such designation would create significant change and displacement of traditional, historic multiple uses for which these areas are currently being managed. Existing management properly emphasizes and enhances multiple consumptive and non-consumptive uses, i.e. livestock, wildlife, recreation, cultural resource protection, etc. that satisfies a wider spectrum of the user public while retaining defacto wilderness values, characteristics and opportunities. The designation of wilderness areas as proposed will create greater management problems in designated and non-designated areas. The potential impacts of wilderness designation on the Skedaddle WSA on the integrity and longevity of the Sierra Army Depot needs to be further examined.

The EIS should reexamine the WSAs and reduce proposed designated areas with respect to the entire Great Basin to those containing the highest criteria rating representative of Great Basin wilderness values and characteristics.

The Lassen County Board of Supervisors appreciates the opportunity to review and comment on the preliminary wilderness recommendations and draft environmental impact statement. The Board hopes these comments will assist the BLM pursuant to the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976.

Respectfully,

John Lovelady, Chairman
Lassen County Board of Supervisors

JL:nes

Distribution List Attached

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North Cal-Nevada RC&D
Washoe Council of Governments Regional Planning Commission
Washoe County Commission

Response to Letter No. 298

298-1 A discussion of the Sierra Army Depot concern is in Chapter Five Consultation and Coordination Section. We have put in the recommendation of the Wilderness Study Report the statement: The Bureau endorses wilderness suitability in the Skedaddle WSA provided that Sierra Army Depot operations will not be altered by wilderness designation. The BLM recognizes the Sierra Army Depot activities as legitimate uses of nearby land and recommends to local, state and federal authorities that there be no impairment of Depot activities because of wilderness designation. We recommend that Congress review the situation concerning the proximity of Sierra Army Depot, prior to drafting the legislation, and make findings that would allow the continuing and potential expansion of operations on the Sierra Army Depot.

298-2 The uses mentioned are, except for commercial trapping, uses that can and will continue under wilderness management. Livestock grazing is grandfathered and wildlife management and hunting are both compatible uses which are allowed in wilderness management. The use of the land would change very little. Commercial trapping is a very insignificant existing use, with no one to our knowledge making a living by trapping in the WSA areas.

298-3 The Wilderness Management Policy (Sept. 1981) contains guidance and guidelines for specific activities. However, it is not intended to specifically cover in detail every conceivable situation that is likely to occur on all of BLM's potential wilderness areas. There will be a wilderness management plan developed, with public input that will be specific to the situations pertinent to the individual wilderness areas upon designation.

298-4 On page 3-10 in the Draft EIS and in the Wilderness Study Report there is a section on how the ecosystem found in these WSA's is represented in the various stages of study and designation in the National Wilderness Preservation System. When Congress looks at the BLM recommendations on a state by state basis, they will decide how many areas of this ecosystem are to be preserved as wilderness. The Wilderness Study Report will specifically address ecological diversity within the National Wilderness Preservation System. Ecosystem diversity is but one of the considerations that leads to designation of an area.

298-5 There would be no displacement of grazing as grazing is an acceptable use of wilderness and is specifically grandfathered in the Wilderness Act. Hunting is also an allowable use within wilderness. Hunting access would change little as most access ways would remain available under the Proposed Actions. It was not felt that the number of hunters that would go to other areas would create any noticeable impact on those other areas. The BLM manages almost a million acres in Lassen County and the proposed actions cumulatively would close less than ten miles of primitive access ways in Lassen County.

298-5A Concerns regarding the Sierra Army Depot Demolition activities are addressed in response 298-1.

298-6 The displacement of users by closing access ways was not felt to be a significant impact in the environmental assessment. The Susanville District contains nearly three million acres of public land which can absorb the use.

298-7 The access routes shown in the EIS were determined as to which were roads and which were ways during the intensive inventory phase of the study, which was completed in 1980. There was a public review of the inventory and numerous changes were made prior to publishing the final inventory. The distinction between a road and a way is a very fine line. We recognize that no inventory of over two million acres will be perfect, but we feel that our inventory as amended by public input represents the current primitive vehicle routes utilized within the WSAs.

298-8 The make-up of the Technical Review Team that developed the proposed action was determined by the District Advisory Council (DAC). A conscious effort was made to develop the team around resource issues. The livestock representatives were the representatives on the District Grazing Advisory Board who were elected by their peers. The wildlife representatives were the local state biologists from California and Nevada. The motorized recreation representatives were chosen from nominations submitted to the DAC.

The TRT held an open house in Susanville prior to their field trip to talk to anyone interested in the process. Both the County and Sierra Army Depot sent representatives. The Sierra Army Depot was subsequently invited to give a formal presentation to the Technical Review Team, and their input was considered before recommendations were made. The TRT process is thoroughly described on page 51.

Defenders OF WILDLIFE

300

RECEIVED
JUN 24 1985
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
SUSANVILLE, CALIFORNIA

June 22, 1985

Mr. Rex Cleary
District Manager
U.S. Bureau of Land Management
705 Hall Street
Susanville, CA 96130

Dear Mr. Cleary:

Defenders of Wildlife submits this letter as our comments and recommendations on BLM's preliminary wilderness recommendations for the Eagle Lake-Cedarville Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs), comprising 13 WSAs in northeastern California and northwestern Nevada.

300-1 We are generally disappointed that BLM's preferred alternative six would only designate about one-third of these qualified WSAs for permanent wilderness protection. While we understand that BLM's recommendations were largely shaped by the two Technical Review Teams (TRTs), these TRTs were dominated by those who do not support wilderness protection. We further submit that the composition of these TRTs was not an accurate cross section of the interested public which, after all, are the collective "owners" of these public lands.

Defenders of Wildlife strongly supports, and urges BLM to recommend, Alternative I, the all wilderness alternative. We believe that the Skedaddle-Buffalo Complex of WSAs (Amedee, Five Springs, Rush Creek, Cherry, and Grass Mountains) should be studied and evaluated for wilderness designation as one comprehensive unit. Indeed, this complex of WSAs comprises 350,000 acres of important wild lands. In addition, the Skedaddle Mountains provide important wildlife habitats, including nesting sites for golden eagles and prairie falcons. BLM's recommended wilderness of only 37,000 of the total 64,000 acres is clearly inadequate.

We are further disturbed that BLM is recommending none of Wall Canyon's 47,000 acres for wilderness. This decision is especially appalling in light of the fact that there are no significant conflicts with grazing, mining, or off-road vehicles on most of this area. The Wall Canyon WSA includes two desert creeks in spectacular canyons, with one containing

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NATIONAL OFFICE: 1244 NINETEENTH STREET, NW • WASHINGTON, DC 20036 • (202) 659-9510

the rare Wall Canyon sucker. This WSA also possesses significant wildlife values, including sage grouse, raptors, antelope, and mule deer. These natural values deserve full wilderness protection, and we therefore recommend that the entire 47,000 acres be recommended for wilderness.

Similarly, we are unhappy that BLM is recommending that only 23,260 of Massacre Rim's 110,000 acres be protected as wilderness. This juniper-dotted plateau deserves protection from continuing off-road vehicle impacts and the pillaging of archaelogical resources by illegal collectors. It is also disturbing that many magnificent western junipers are being systematically lost by firewood cutting. Again, we believe the entire 110,000 acres within this WSA should be designated as wilderness.

The High Rock Canyon Complex of four WSAs is a magnificent natural treasure, providing outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation and wildlife protection. This area is an ideal site for bighorn sheep reintroduction. The abundant cliffs provide excellent nesting sites for golden eagles, prairie falcons, and other raptor species. BLM's recommendation for only 57,230 acres as wilderness is disappointing. We support full wilderness designation for these four WSAs.

Finally, we wish to express our disagreement with BLM's use of many inappropriate reasons for failing to recommend wilderness designations. For example, if a WSA qualifies for wilderness designation, its status should not be jeopardized through BLM's inability to adequately control off-road vehicles. This appears to be an enforcement problem, not related to whether a WSA deserves to be wilderness. Of course, once a WSA is designated as wilderness, every effort should be made to improve enforcement of the off-road vehicle prohibition. Similarly, we believe it is improper to cite "sights and sounds" outside a WSA to justify a negative wilderness recommendation. The values within the WSA should govern the decision.

Again, please support and work for implementation of Alternative I, the all wilderness alternative. Thank you very much for considering our views.

Sincerely,

Richard Spotts
js

Richard Spotts
California/Nevada Representative
Defenders of Wildlife

RS/js

cc: Interested parties.

Response to Letter No. 300

300-1 The TRT Teams recommending to the Bureau were made up of individuals representing a wide span of interests. The team was not weighted toward either environmentalists or industry. The working of the team consensus process requires that all team members must reach agreement. This allows any one member, representing his constituency, to have a veto of the recommendation. Full consensus was reached on twelve of the thirteen WSA's regarding wilderness (Chapter I, Technical Review Team Process).

Among the two eight member TRT groups each TRT included representatives from California Department of Fish and Game or Nevada Department of Wildlife, the Sierra Club, and wild horse and burro protection groups.

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

OF

THE UNITED STATES

FOUNDED 1899

AN ASSOCIATION OF MEN WHO HAVE FOUGHT AMERICA'S FOREIGN WARS ON LAND AND SEA AND IN THE AIR

310

FROM

VFW Post #6356

Drawer G

Herlong, California 96113

To:
Mr. Rex Cleary
Bureau of Land Management
District Office
Susanville, California 96130

Reply to preliminary wilderness area recommendations- Eagle Lake- Cedarville study areas. Draft environmental impact statement.

Subject: WSA CA-020-612, Skedaddle Mountain

Dear Mr. Cleary:

We, the membership of VFW Post #6356, of Herlong, are in opposition to the making of the Skedaddle WSA into a wilderness area. Referring to alternative V, 0 acres are recommended for wilderness area designation, or 63,790 acres non-wilderness. The Skedaddle mountains are not in keeping with a wilderness area.

The existing grandfathered problems in the area would be extremely difficult and expensive to terminate or block off:

1- the numerous cherrystem roads
2- the access roads that would have to be fenced, which lead into private lands within the boundaries of the proposed wilderness area
3- the noise factors and diesel exhaust from the railroad, a very vital necessity to this county and the Sierra Army Depot 310-1
4- live stock grazing within the area, particularly at roundup time
5- the offroad vehicle traffic that would continue on on the outer perimeter; both 4 and 5 would be a law enforcement problem
6- hunting on the outer perimeters; illegal entry to the area very probable
7- the noise and dust problems existing from the Sierra Army Depot demolition grounds, plus the added possibility of hikers, horse back riders straying into into the grounds, and in some cases protesters deliberately walking into the grounds, which would cause national security as well as safety problems
8- the visual qualities of the area would be affected by geo-thermal drilling and high voltage power lines

Dept. of Interior
RECEIVED
JUN 25 1980
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
SUSANVILLE, CALIFORNIA

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

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AN ASSOCIATION OF MEN WHO HAVE FOUGHT AMERICA'S FOREIGN WARS ON LAND AND SEA AND IN THE AIR

FROM

310-1 (cont.)

9- the possible increase of visitors to this area would not necessarily bring any added monies to this County of Lassen, as they would come to the area well stocked with provisions, and in many cases, vehicle fuel

10-this could cause a higher amount of vandalism to archaelogical sites; again law enforcement would be difficult to maintain

In summing this up, we believe the Skadaddle mountain area should continue as is, with the exception of better enforcement of existing laws.

In making this a wilderness area, the loss of revenue would be nearly catastrophic. From 1977 through 1983, hunting in the area added an economic value of $211,000 per year to the county. We do not have today's figures, but surely this would be the same or more.

The cattle industry would suffer as grazing rights would either be stopped or greatly reduced.

The Sierra Army Depot is a vital installation to the U. S. Government. It has a payroll of 21.8 million dollars annually. We have reason to believe that there will be increased missions at the depot, and the payroll will reach $23,000,000. However, the making of the Skedaddle WSA into a wilderness area could stop, reduce or hamper any increase in missions at the depot. The U.S. army has a habit of closing these depots and moving them to more agreeable states or counties when other agencies, states or counties become intolerable.

The reduction of missions means the reduction of workload, and therefore employees.

In accordance with the Veterans Preference Act, the majority of employees at Sierra Army Depot is veterans, some disabled. As veterans, residents and home owners of this county, we oppose Skedaddle mountain as a wilderness area for the above reasons. We do not oppose other wilderness areas, but we do not need any which will affect the livelihood of the people in Lassen County.

Tony Vigil

Tony Vigil, Commander

Attest:

Duane C. Schlusler

Duane C. Schlusler, Adjutant

Response to Letter No. 310

310-1 Refer to the responses for letter No. 318 concerning operations of the Sierra Army Depot. Potential impacts associated with livestock grazing, visual resources, archeological resources, and vehicular access/ORV use are addressed in Chapter 4.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
SIERRA ARMY DEPOT
HERLONG, CALIFORNIA 96113-5000

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

24 JUN 1985

318

RECEIVED
JUN 6 1985
BUREAU OF LAND
MANAGEMENT
SUSANVILLE, CALIFORNIA

Office of the
Commander

Mr. Rex Cleary
Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
P. O. Box 1090
Susanville, California 96130

Re: Draft Environmental Impact Statement - Preliminary Wilderness Recommendations for the Eagle Lake - Cedarville Study Areas - Bureau of Land Management, October 1984

Dear Mr. Cleary:

Sierra Army Depot has reviewed the above referenced report and finds that Alternative V, which states that none of the Wilderness Study Areas be recommended as suitable, is the only alternative that will not have an adverse effect upon the goal to maintain our National Defense and upon the economic stability and future growth of Lassen County. However, our particular concern is the designated area titled Skedaddle Mountain (CA-020-612). The placement of a wilderness area near the boundaries of this installation would be detrimental to the required missions this depot must perform and it does not provide the requirements mandated by Congress to the user for a wilderness area. Therefore, our reasons for stressing the adoption of Alternative V are as follows:

As outlined in the above-referenced document, the Wilderness Management Policy established certain requirements that must be followed to determine an area's suitability or non-suitability for preservation as wilderness. It is the decision of this depot that certain listed criteria have not been met or cannot be maintained to meet the wilderness requirements for Skedaddle Mountain (CA-020-612).

1. Criterion No. 1

318-1 As stated in the above referenced document, page 1-4, "Evaluation of wilderness values requires mandatory wilderness characteristics for size, naturalness, and outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation." Designating a wilderness area adjacent to an existing operation which consists of

detonating large quantities of explosives on a regular basis is definitely not conducive to the optimum solitude that Congress has mandated for these areas.

Noise studies conducted by the University of Utah for this installation concluded that the detonation of 500 pounds of TNT
318-1 produced a seismic disturbance that extended beyond 15,000 feet.
cont. Normal operations at this installation require the detonation of explosives up to 5000 pounds of TNT on an almost daily basis. During the summer months, favorable weather conditions permit increased capabilities and we are able to detonate 10,000 pounds without adverse impact to the environment. Thus seismic, noise, and visual disturbances are much greater which, in turn, will impair the use of an adjacent area as a wilderness.

Finally, page 2-97 of the above-referenced document outlines specific requirements for Sierra Army Depot's use of aircraft in the wilderness area. This statement was drafted only taking into consideration our present operation utilizing a small number of helicopters. However, this installation has been tasked to provide mission support to the U.S. Air Force. This contingent will include the use of 24 fighter planes at Sierra Army Depot's air-
318-2 field. The operating schedule for these aircraft includes 5 take-offs and landings per day, per plane. Low level altitude approaches to Sierra Army Depot's airfield may also be a requirement and these approaches could be from all directions including overflights of the proposed wilderness area. This mission also conflicts with the "Wilderness Management Policy Handbook" (page 10) which states, "Use of aircraft ... may be permitted to continue in wilderness areas where such uses were established <u>prior</u> to the date the area entered the National Wilderness Preservation System. Such use, when <u>permitted to continue</u>, will be monitored on a regular basis to determine if its continuation is appropriate. Use may be <u>regulated or discontinued</u> as necessary to protect resources in the area to preserve the area's wilderness character." These restrictions, as outlined, are open to broad interpretation and enforcement. Sierra Army Depot cannot operate effectively under any such requirements which could impact upon the existence of this installation.

2. <u>Criterion 2, Quality Standard No. 5 - Social Economic</u>

Due to the unique geographical area that this depot occupies,
318-3 we are capable of performing intricate missions, while maintaining environmental compliance, that other depots throughout the U.S. cannot perform. Urban encroachment and the ever increasing stringent Federal, State, and Local regulatory requirements placed upon

other depots have either restricted or prohibited open detonation and burning of reactive agents. Therefore, Sierra Army Depot's missions are ever increasing. An increase of frequency and size of detonation will most definitely have an adverse impact upon the use of a designated wilderness area. Furthermore, it is our determination that our growth would violate the very concepts of the "Interim Management Policy and Guidelines for Lands Under Wilderness Review" regarding cumulative impacts. Even though detonation would not take place upon lands designated as wilder-
318-3 ness, the noise, ground shock, and visual disturbances would en-
cont. croach upon said land and adversely affect its use. If, through outside influences, we were to be prohibited from performing present or increased operations, this would have a definite negative impact upon the socio-economic growth of Lassen County. An increase in workload normally promotes an increase in employment. Obviously, a reduction in our mission would produce an adverse effect on same. Presently, Lassen County's economy is handicapped by an 11 percent unemployment rate. To gamble with the operation of this installation and the growth of the community is not in accord with Quality Standard No. 5. We must look at the larger issue here: Is it worth putting the economic stability of Lassen County in a precarious position simply to change the designation of a piece of real estate, which, in our professional opinion, does not offer the unique special features (i.e. economic, geological, scientific, educational, scenic or historical values) as mandated in Criterion No. 1?

3. Criterion 2, Quality Standard No. 6 - Consistency with Other Plans

On February 26, 1985, Sierra Army Depot submitted an official request to the Lassen County Planning Commission to extend the present public safety zone surrounding the upper demolition grounds to three (3) miles. This revised extension is necessary due to the more sophisticated missions we now perform in this
318-4 area. The zone extension will enhance our ability to complete our missions successfully and, of greater importance, ensures the safety of the general public. However, through no fault of the Bureau of Land Management or Sierra Army Depot, this extension is not reflected in any of the alternatives listed in the referenced study. It is our opinion that the designation of land as "wilderness" within a public safety zone is contradictory to the very stringent concepts of a proposed wilderness area and not consistent with local government planning.

318-5 Sierra Army Depot is also concerned over the designation of the Dry Valley Rim (CA-020-615) proposed as a wilderness area. Although our impact upon this area is not as severe as it would be towards the Skedaddle Mountain area, our mission which produces noise, visual and air disturbances would encroach upon this area also. In particular, our new mission to support the U.S. Air Force would generate additional noise and ground disturbances. To reduce a major portion of this designation in the southern sector would be this depot's preferred alternative rather than the total removal for consideration of the entire proposed area. However, this alternative is not listed in the Environmental Impact Statement and therefore, we must support Alternative V, a no action alternative, for this area as well.

Sierra Army Depot strongly supports the concepts of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. However, the placement of a wilderness area within the Skedaddle Mountain region threatens the integrity, growth and security of this installation, and simultaneously, the economic growth of Lassen County, California. Of equal importance, the mandatory requirements that a wilderness area must offer to the general public is not consistent with our vital mission to the National Defense. Therefore, it is our determination that Alternative V, a no action for designation of Skedaddle Mountain (CA-020-612) and Dry Valley Rim (CA-020-615) as Wilderness Areas, be adopted.

In the event you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Mr. Fred H. Lockley, at (916) 827-4600.

Sincerely,

Victor J. Fenwick, Jr.
Colonel, U.S. Army
Commanding

Copies Furnished:

Lassen County Planning Commission
U.S. Army Materiel Command, AMCEN-R
U.S. Army Depot System Command, AMSDS-RM-EF

Response to Letter No. 318

318-1 In the proposed action, there is an allowance made for the detonation area so that the area recommended as suitable is no closer than approximately 2½ miles from the detonation site. There is also an intervening ridge between the detonation site and much of the suitable area.

318-2 The use referred to on page 2-97 was for landing of aircraft by Sierra Army Depot in the WSA. The expanded use would come under section 12 on page 30 of the Wilderness Management Policy. It states that there is no specific prohibition of overflight of wilderness by aircraft. It makes provision for essential military missions and directs that where low overflights are a problem, wilderness management plans will provide for liaison with proper military authorities, the Federal Aviation Administration and contact with pilots in the general area in an effort to reduce low flight. As the runways at the Sierra Army Depot are oriented in a east-west direction and the bombing ranges of Nevada are in a south-easterly direction, the impacts on the Skedaddle WSA which is north of the Depot would be minimized. We will work with the Depot on this, and this is also part of the reason we have added a recommendation in the Wilderness Study Report to Congress to review the situation concerning the proximity of Sierra Army Depot to the suitable area in Skedaddle WSA prior to drafting legislation and make findings that would allow the continuing and potential expansion of operations on the Sierra Army Depot.

318-3 Based on our interpretation of the Wilderness Management Policy and the information you have provided, the continued and expanding operation of the Sierra Army Depot can continue with the recommended suitable areas as defined in the Preferred Alternative. We have established boundaries that are separated from the Depot. As a result of your concern, we are adding to the Wilderness Study Report the recommendation that Congress review the situation concerning the proximity of Sierra Army Depot prior to drafting of legislation, and make findings that would allow the continuing and potential expansion of operations on the Sierra Army Depot.

318-4 In the development of the Proposed Action for the Skedaddle WSA, the present Lassen County Public Safety Zone was used to define the southern boundary of the suitable area. Should an extented safety zone be required or adopted by Lassen County, the wilderness management plan for the WSA could reflect the need to control visitor use to maintain public safety.

318-5 The southern most part of the WSA is recommended as non-suitable in the proposed action and the partial wilderness alternatives. One consideration is the impact of the prevailing winds blowing dust clouds from the detonations over the area.

Sierra Club
Mother Lode Chapter
P.O. BOX 1335, SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95806

352

RECEIVED
JUN 27 1985
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
SUSANVILLE, CALIFORNIA

June 27, 1985

Mr. Rex Cleary
Manager
Susanville District
Bureau of Land Managment
P.O. Box 1090
Susanville, CA 96310

Re: Preliminary WildernessRecommendations, Eagle Lake-Cedarville Study Areas, Draft Environmental Impacts.

Dear Mr. Cleary:

The Mother Lode Chapter, Sierra Club has strong interest in the 13 WSA's being reviewed for wilderness in this draft EIS. Through its two northern subunits, the Shasta Group centered in Redding and the Yahi group centered in Chico, the Mother Lode Chapter has sponsered 11 recreational outings to the 6 WSA's in the Eagle Lake Resource Area in the last 4 years. Several leaders from the two groups have also visited the Wall Canyon and Little High Rock Canyon Areas on a Scouting trip in October 1984. We anticipate future outings in these areas.

Four of the outings have been Memorial Day Weekend backpack trips, two times into the Five Springs Area, once into the Skeedaddle Mountains and once into the Buffalo Hills Area. Two other outings were two day weekend backpacks into the Tunnison Mountain Area and the Skeedaddle Mountains. The remaining 5 outings were carcamp trips that included day hikes into the Dry Valley Rim/Eagle Head, Twin Peaks, Tunnison Mountain and Skeedaddle Areas. Another group, the Maidu Group centered in Placerville, has held Memorial Day Weekend carcamps to the Black Rock Desert and High Rock Canyon Areas.

The average number of people attending these outings has been 15 with a high of over 25. We are confident that these outings represent only a fraction of the primitive recreation visits to these WSA's and should be consideres as such. The Mother Lode Chapter feels that these figures demonstrate that ther is significant interest in primitive recreational use of the roadless portions of the Susanville District, Bureau of Land Managment (BLM).

352-1 The proposed recommendation of 331,348 acres for wilderness represents only at most 15% of the of the lands originally inventoried as roadless by Susanville District, BLMduring the WSA selection process in 1978 and 1979. This figure is based on an estimated average of 10,000 acres per area for the 143 areas dropped from further wilderness consideration at the end of the selection process, and the real percentage for recommended wilderness is most likely less than 15% of the Susanville Districts roadless lands.

352-1 cont. The Mother Lode Chapter, Sierra Club feels that these percentages clearly demonstrate that the majority of roadless lands in Susanville District, BLM are available already for other forms of recreation, and the final EIS should consider the fact that such availability will not cause a loss of mechanized recreational use in the Susanville District, BLM. However, wilderness designation of a portion of these lands can only increase the primitive recreation use of the Susanvill District, BLM's lands. This use includes hunters, who prefer a primitive type hunting experience as well as hiking enthusiasts. The Mother Lode Chapter also feels that many of the dropped areas such as Shinn Mtn, Observation Peak, McDonald Mtn, Shafer Mtn, Burro Mtn and other areas in Nevada have scenic qualities equivalent to those found in the WSA's. The Mother Lode Chapter makes these points because the Draft EIS continues the policy of only looking at the lands within the WSA's, and it does not reflect the lands available to non primitive recreationists outside the WSA's.

Because the areas recommended for wilderness are such a small percentage of the Susanville Districts roadless lands, the Mother Lode Chapter feels that this wilderness recommendation is a bare minimum proposal; but, because we participated in the TRT process for the Eagle Lake Resource Area, and because this TRT's proposal does represent a true compromise, the Mother Lode Chapter, Sierra Club does support the prefered alternative for the Eagle Lake Resource Area. The Toiyabe Chapter, Sierra Club's position for the Surprise Resource Area is the official Sierra Club position for those areas, and the Mother Lode Chapter supports the Toiyabe Chapter's positions for the Surprise WSA's.

352-2 The Mother Lode Chapter does have concerns that the TRT compromise has no guaranty that it will be followed out until Congress has acted to make all the recommended areas officially wilderness. Because of this problem, we feel that the compromise might be jepordized if areas such as Five Springs, Horse Lake Mtn or Buffalo Hills are released for non wilderness uses befor all the recommended wilderness areas are acted on by Congress. Therefore, the Mother Lode Chapter feels that the Susanville District, BLM should recommend that all 13 WSA's be managed to protect their wilderness values until all areas recommended for wilderness by the TRT's are designated wilderness by Congress.

The Mother Lode Chapter is also concerned about the discussion given man made effects from outside the WSA's. The BLM should consider only man made sights and sounds that are modern in nature, that are located inside the WSA's, and that are not part of one of the allowed uses within wilderness, when the BLM gives reasons for not recommending an area for wilderness designation. Congress has designated wilderness areas such as Mount Shasta and San Jacinto that are within view and sound of railroads and interstate highways. Congress has also designated the Sandia Wilderness in New Mexico and the San Gabriel, Sheep Mountain and Cucamonga Wilderness areas in Southern California, and all of these areas overlook major metropolitan areas. The California areas also have significant smog effects from the Los Angeles Basin.

Congress also designated as part of the Trinity Alps Wilderness areas that contained entire mining towns during the late 1800's. Congress has also stated in the Wilderness Act of 1976 that grazing is an allowed use within wilderness areas on BLM lands. The Mother Lode Chapter feels that these actions by Congress indicate that the sights and sounds that are of significance to wilderness designation are those inside the wilderness, modern in nature and not part of a use allowed within a designated or proposed wilderness.

In addition to these general comments the Mother Lode Chapter would like to make the following comments regarding each individual WSA.

Tunnison Mountain CA-020-311:

352-3 The proposed wilderness is a good one; however, the outside sights and sounds discussion is an example of over concern by the BLM. The Bureau should consider the possibility of purchasing the two small parcels along Willow Creek that breakup the public ownership of Willow Creek Canyon.

Skedaddle Mountains CA-020-612

The Sierra Club's position regarding the adjoining Sierra Army Depot is well stated by Russ Shay in his letter to the Susanville BLM, and the Mother Lode Chapter refers the BLM to this letter and our own comments regarding outside sghts and sounds for the Bureau's review of these problems.

The Mother Lode Chapter feels that the Skedaddles have truly surperior wilderness quality and pontential, and therefore, we strongly support the TRT proposal for wilderness for the Skedaddles. However, since the TRT left the decision of what to do with the roads and ways areas above the Skeddadle Ranch up to the BLM, we would like to recommend that those portions of the middle and southern ways above the springs are being over grown by brush, and these portions could be added to the wilderness recommendation.

Five Springs CA-020-609

One of our biggest dissapointments was that the TRT did not recommend any of this area for wilderness designation. As already stated two of the Mother Lode Chapter's outings over Memorial Day Weekends were held in this WSA. We have found the area to be one good for hiking and one containing colorfull contrasting vegetation, numerous springs and draws, and permanent water courses with native fish. We feel that the TRT did not review the area adequatly from the ground, because their only helecopter stop was on the northern boundary to visit a petroglyph site. The remainder of their viewing of the area was done from the air. From the ground one discovers a truly magnificant wilderness that starts just west of Cherry Spring, progresses north and east to include the eastern ridges of Five Springs Mountain, continues across the narrow canyon portion of Rush Creek, and extends eastward up and over all of Cherry Mountain Ridge towards the Twin Peaks Area.

This potential wilderness is much more than the 'ridgetop wilderness' mentioned in the EIS, and because of these unique qualities stated here, the Mother Lode Chapt. recommends that the BLM consider managment methods to protect these values on a permanent basis, such as Carl Weidert's proposed ACEC for Cherry Spring. In spite of the facts stated here and our strong feelings for the Five Springs Area, The Mother Lode Chapter still supports the TRT's proposal for this area at this time.

Dry Valley Rim/Eagle Head CA-020-615 and Twin Peaks CA-020-619A

We support the recommended draft proposals for these two beautiful areas that we have had several hikes into, and that lie just west of the equally beautiful Smoke Desert.

Buffalo Hills CA-020-619

The eastern and southern canyon areas along the two forks of Buffalo Creek, but only the western side canyons of the North Fork, could aesily have been given a wilderness recommendation; however, the Mother Lode Chapter again will support the TRT's recommendation at this time.

Wall Canyon/Hays Canyon Range CA-020-805

One of our biggest disapointments was that the BLM did not recommend any of this area for wilderness designation. The fact that those members of the TRT, who would visit this area because of its wilderness values, felt that the area was of wilderness quality, should have been adequate reason for the BLM to recommend wilderness for those portions of the Wall Canyon Area that lacked resource or managment problems. after all, who is the better judge of an areas wilderness quality than those who use those areas as wilderness.

The bladed road is no more than a large trail, and its equivilant can be found in already existing wilderness areas such as the Huricane Deck Trail in the San Rafael Wilderness. The fence is a function of the Congressionally designated use of grazing. The Mother Lode Chapter feels that the steep walled canyons and ridges of the southern portions of this WSA and the many low ridges and draws of Boulder Mountain provide for a high quality wilderness experience throughout the entire core area of the Wall Canyon WSA. We feel that the truly great scenic values of Wall Canyon itself warrents closure of the narrow road here at the mouth of the canyon.

High Rock Canyon Complex CA-020-913, CA-020-913A, CA-020-913B, and CA-020-914

The Mother Lode Chapter is dissapointed that no wilderness was recommended for Yellow Rock Canyon, but we accept the TRT proposal at this time. The High Rock Complex clearly has scenic qualities that are unsurpassed elsewhere in the Susanville District, and we support the Toiyabe Chapter's recommendations for these WSA's.

Massacre Rim CA-020-1013

We urge the BLM to consider the fact that the archaeological resources found here are better protected by wilderness designation than they would be under ACEC status. We are also in agreement with the points Carl Weidert makes about the Western Juniper Woodland found here. Our recommendations for this area are the same as those from the Toiyabe Chapter, Sierra Club.

Sheldon Contiguous CA-020-1012

The Mother Lode Chapter supports the TRT proposal for this WSA.

This statement has been prepared by Stan Weidert for the Mother Lode Chapter, Sierra Club. It reflects the position of the Mother Lode Chapter at this time. Continued support of the TRT process is dependent upon all participating parties continuing their support of the TRT process. If the BLM has any questions regarding this statement they should contact Stan at 474-3679.

Sincerely

Stan Weidert

Stan Weidert
Shasta Group Delegate to
Mother Lode Chapter Executive Committee

cc Steve Evans
Marge Sill
Kathy Bender
Jim Eaton
Patty Hedge
Russ Shay

Response to Letter No. 352

352-1 In the FEIS Chapter IV, we have recognized that recreational ORV use would be displaced from suitably recommended areas, but we also acknowledged that there are adequate areas available to absorb this displaced use without impacting the existing resources.

352-2 It is the policy of the Bureau to manage all WSA's so as to protect those qualities that qualified them for WSA status until Congress releases them from WSA status.

352-3 The private parcels identified are outside the WSA. However should the opportunity and funding become available, the BLM would consider purchase or acquisition of a public access easement if management of Willow Creek Canyon would benefit.

RECEIVED
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

6/26/85

Carl L. Weidert III
Rt. 2 Box 175
Shingletown, CA 96088

Rex Cleary
Bureau of Land Management
705 Hall Street
Susanville, CA 96130

Sir:

The following are my comments on the Preliminary Wilderness Eagle Lake - Cedarville Study Areas Draft Environmental Impact Statement. I have enjoyed backpacking, dayhiking photographing and fishing in six of the WSA'S. These being Wall Canyon and all of the Eagle Lake study areas. The trips were four Memorial Day weekend three day backpacks to the Skedaddles, Buffalo Hills and two trips to Five Springs; weekend car camps with day hikes into Wall Canyon, Twin Peaks, Dry Valley Rim and Tunnison Mountain. At all times the areas provided solitude. It is supprising how fast people disappear from view, even in areas of low relief. The only people encountered inside study area boundries were a BLM and Nevada Fish and Game employee installing a quail guzzler at the base of Red Rock Canyon in Dry Valley Rim and a sheep herder driving a band of sheep up the Cherry creek branch of Rush creek in Five Springs.

The behavior of collared lizards, western fence lizards sagebrush lizards, a round tailed ground squirrel and marmot which allowed close enough approaches to obtain close up photographs with a 35 mm camera using normal lens demonstrates the remoteness and wildness of these areas. Each area has its own unique biological, geological and cultural features that can be discovered and understood best if the areas are covered on the ground, a weakness of the TRT aerial coverage with limited stops. The broad vistas characteristic of desert ecosystems where one can see pronghorn antelope, mule deer, wild horses or watch golden eagles hunting ground squirrels and rabbits are in sharp contrast to the small jewels of willow, aspen or choke cherry groves around springs or in canyons with live streams. Each containing rich bird life. In the canyons and peaks on the rocks are found striking litchen covered rocks sometimes surrounding the white streaks of mineral crystals from pack rat urine. All interspurced with dense pockets of wildflowers of different kinds in the sagebrush sea. These are the reasons that these desert ecosystems need to be added to the wilderness system. All six areas

are worthy of inclusion into the national wilderness system.

I am disappointed that the preferred alternative has recommended for non-wilderness all areas that have extensive western juniper (Juniperus occidentalis) woodlands. This exclusion leaves this great basin vegetation type ecosystem underrepresented. This seems to have been an oversight by BLM and the TRT and the inclusion of significant western juniper woodlands into wilderness needs to be reconsidered. Areas to be examined are the core of Wall Canyon and the portion of Massacre Rim recommended for ACEC designation. These areas are different vegetatively from the juniper - pine ecotone found on limited acreage in Tunnison Mountain.

The following are comments on specific areas:

Skedaddle Mountains

A Memorial Day weekend backpack by the Shasta Group of the Sierra Club was one of the most enjoyed backpacks that the group has had. The area has a surprising amount of geological and biological variety and photographic opportunities in the climb from the valley floor to the top of Hot Springs peak. The climb up the narrow Wendel canyon with its flowing stream from the sagebrush-rabbit brush-ephedra alluvial fan through willow, choke cherry, service berry wild roses and assorted wildflowers, with the framed views of the higher peaks and the emergence into the roaling basin of short sagebrush and wildflowers makes a good day hike or first day of a backpack. A hike to the top of Hot Springs peak the next day provides superior views of the Sierras, interior mountains and Smoke Creek desert. The return through aspen groves with amazing concentrations and diversity of birds fills the second day.

While I was in the area I did not hear any noise from either the railroad or Sierra Army Depot. The canyons and ridres should effectively block out any noise or plumes of smoke from the ordinance detinations. I have watched detinations from Hwy. 395 and heard no noise and watched the plumes of smoke dissipate quickly. On the exposed areas below the ridges and out of the canyons any noise and smoke would only be transitory as the EIS states correctly. The fears of the Sierra Army Depotthat environmentalists would sue because of the noise and smoke are unfounded because their operations constitute prior useage. Language in the wilderness bill could completly protect this prior use. The safty issue raised is a red herring. Entry has been allowed into the area throughout the history of the Depot without any problems. Even if the Depot would demonstrate the need for protection

below Amadee ridge, a situation I find hard to imagine with the elevation gain in the one mile wilderness boundry setback, there are precidents to keep the area in wilderness. Wilderness has been designated for White Sands National Monument adjacent to a test missle impact zone. A limited area of adjacent wilderness is closed to public entry and stray rockets are allowed to be recovered. I strongly oppose any elimination of any acreage from the recommended area.

Dry Valley Rim

The canyons on the east enscarpment provide good quality day hikes. I enjoyed the impressive hike up Red Rock canyon, with its different colored volcanic formations and views of the mountain surrounded Smoke Creek desert. A hike into Jenkins Troughs spring with its willows and water confirmed that this area would provide a good base camp to explore the uplands and canyons of the study area. The adjusted boundry in this area has eliminated all traces of motorized entry. The area is definitly well qualified for wilderness.

Twin Peaks

The pallisades and canyons formed by Smoke and Shin creeks presented a good challenge to get down into the canyon and provided instant solitude, scenic views and rainbow trout fishing when we did. This area was one of the most naturalthat I have been into and contrasts nicely with the more rounded broader Buffalo Creek canyon with its broad vistas. The sighting of a green herron on Buffalo creek was a surprise. It is nice to know that this creek has enough fish to support fish eating birds. The collared lizards, horned lizards that we saw added interest to the area as did the golden eagles.

The view from Twin peak should be spectacular. Now that a good spring and base camp has been located on the southern approach to the mountain near Burro creek, we should be able to get to the top next year. In our hikes up Buffalo creek and across the ridges and canyons in the Burro creek area, there was no evidence of ORV use inside the proposed boundries.

Tunnison Mountain

The area is enhanced with the diversity of vegetation found in the ecotone between the ponderosa pine and western juniper woodland, the sagebrush and ripparian communities. The chance of catching large brown trout, one snapped my 4 lb. test line, in the solitude of Willow creek canyon provides a good quality wilderness experience. The two times that I was in the area I never experienced the highway or train

intrusions cited by the text. Wilderness designation for the area is definitely warrented.

Five Springs

This area has been the sites of two successfull Sierra Club Memorial Day weekend backpack trips. The three large springs found in the area, each with their own unique tree species - aspen, yellow willow and choke cherry- provide excellent campsights. I agree that there are well developed ways and inholdings that cut into the northwestern part of the study area which should be removed from wilderness,but there is a core area surrounding Cherry Mountain, Rush creek springs, Cherry springs and the southern rim of Five Springs mountain that provided solitude and had no ORV intrusion. This core area should have been recommended for wilderness designation as has no apparent conflicts and does provide solitude and a quality desert wilderness experience. The fact that the TRT did not land inside this area of the WSA prejudiced its chances for wilderness recommendation. At the very least BLM should designate the large - up to ten inch diameter and 25 foot tall- Choke cherry trees, the exceptionally large yellow flowered current bush and the litchen covered rock Indian hunting blinds found arround Cherry springs as an ACEC.

Buffalo Hills

I agree that this study area has management problems and probably sh ould not be recommended for wilderness. We did have a good Memorial Day weekend to a spring on Cottonwood creek and had a good day hike to Hole in the Ground. It was amazing how much solitude that we had at our camp in the low relief canyon. The area had the most antelope and mule deer of any of the study areas. If BLM aquires the offending inholdings, the area should be reevaluated for wilderness. I find the minerals clamed to be found in the basalt hard to believe. How was this imformation obtained by BLM?

Wall Canyon

It was a welcome change to findrock types other than basalts in this study area. This alone makes the area different from the southern study areas. The hjke up Wall creek provided solitude and a diversity of topographic features. From the canyon rim and road one could see the stands of western juniper and mountain mahogany on the interior ridges. A backpack trip to these and the headwaters of Mountain View creek and the aspen groves would definitly provide a quality wilderness experience. I have seen the fence and blade track that BLM has used in rejecting this area and do not feel that it would

affect the quality of the wilderness experience. The 28,000 core area with no conflicts should be recommended for wilderness designation. This area would also correct the oversight of not including significant great basin western juniper woodlands into the wilderness recommendations

In conclusion BLM should recommend for wilderness to congress all of the TRT's recommendations shown in Alternative VI and reevaluate and correct the oversight of not including in the preferred alternative significant representation of the western juniper woodland ecosystem. The Cherry Spring area should be considered for ACEC designation. There should be no actions taken by BLM that would degrade the wilderness values of any study area until congress has acted on all of the study areas.

Sincerely

Carl L Weidert III

Carl L. Weidert

Response to Letter No. 353

353-1 Mineral values were identified in the Barringer Report. (See references). This report was contracted by the Bureau and consisted of taking and analyzing stream sediment samples.

720 Washoe
Susanville CA 96130

Rex Cleary
BLM Susanville
705 Hall Street
Susanville CA 96130

June 26, 1985

Dear Rex:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Wilderness DEIS and proposals for the Eagle Lake and Surprise Resource Areas in writing. I hereby incorporate by reference my previous comments at the wilderness public hearings and will not repeat them. I would like to speak briefly to the issue of wilderness suitability, and conclude with specific comments on the DEIS.

1. WILDERNESS SUITABILITY

Despite the guidelines in the BLM Wilderness Study Policy (2/3/82), wilderness suitability is in the eye of the beholder; decisions thereon are necessarily subjective and personal, more of a value judgment than an objective analysis. But one piece of evidence about whether an area is suitable for wilderness is whether it receives wilderness-type uses currently. I have personally visited nearly all the wilderness study areas in the Susanville District, have hiked and backpacked and camped in many of them, and have noticed an increasing trend in the number of users in the backcountry like myself as these remote areas become discovered. Attached are photographs documenting some of these wilderness-type trips, when they occurred, and how many people attended. They should help dispel some questions as to whether these wilderness study areas are used, and should help establish that they are in fact suitable for wilderness designation. They are already providing outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation, unconfined recreation, and for solitude. They are likely to continue to do so, and increasingly after designation makes them more well known. Of all the people who I have hiked and backpacked with into these areas, nobody has indicated that they were not suitable for wilderness. The photos show individuals and groups up to 17 people enjoying the wilderness, and interestingly, show an overall increase in numbers of recreationists over time. As our population increases, the demand for wilderness including BLM wilderness will also increase over time. Because wilderness is a non-renewable resource, agencies need to set aside enough now to last indefinitely. This argues for recommending as much as possible in the Susanville District.

2. DEIS DOCUMENT

The best feature of the DEIS document is the 1" to the mile topo maps; they enable detailed and accurate study. However, (1) the Energy/Minerals map for the Wall Canyon WSA appears to be missing from the document as well as table of contents, and should be printed in the FEIS, (2) the name Hays
355-1 Canyon Range appears instead of Wall Canyon on the latter's maps for an unknown reason, leading to confusion among the public who hope to see Wall Canyon recommended for wilderness, and (3) unaccountably, a scenic part of the Dry Valley Rim WSA on the northeast border bordering Smoke Creek has been deleted from the preferred alternative map; this deletion is news to me and was never to my knowledge part of the TRT consensus. If so, then it
355-2 should be restored to the proposal because it is an integral part thereof.

355-2 (cont) This leads to the second point, that the DEIS fails to discuss the very significant Nobles Emigrant Trail which passes along or inside the Dry Valley Rim/Eagle Head area near its northeastern boundary. Much of the trail elsewhere is obliterated by ORV's and other disturbances, but on the south side of Smoke Creek there is good potential to protect the trail remnant within the wilderness, thus enhancing both the wilderness and the trail.

Other comments:

List of TRT members: "dispensed recreation" is definitely not he kind of recreation that Roger Scholl and I were trying to represent -- I thought it was "dispersed recreation."

355-3 p. iii. Here and occasionally the DEIS equates the preferred alternative directly with the TRT consensus without noting that BLM decided on non-wilderness for Wall Canyon, not the TRT. The TRT was split 4-4 on Wall Canyon, with half believing it should have the 28,000 acre core recommended suitable. Which I completely agree with. For accuracy, such references should be kept technically accurate.

Chapter 2 and 3 throughout. In the Intensive Wilderness Inventory, many people requested that BLM consider the "Wilderness Complex" concept, wherein adjacent wilderness units complement and enhance each other. Each time, the BLM responded (Inventory p. 97, for example) that this was irrelevant to the inventory and would be a wilderness "Study Phase consideration."

355-4 However, in the DEIS and specifically these chapters, there is little or no mention of the benefits that wilderness complexes would represent in the all-wilderness alternative, and only passing references to such advantages in the other some-wilderness alternatives. For example, although the Dry Valley Rim (p. 2-98) mentions the complex with the Skedaddles, the Skedaddles write-up does not mention it (p. 2-95 ff). BLM should keep its commitment to make a full analysis of the benefits of wilderness complexes.

Page 2-98. "The remainder of the WSA is unmanageable" is an excessively broad characterization.

355-5 Page 3-63 refers to mineral data that would be informative if mapped. Are the mineral claims outside the "core" area recommended suitable in Alternative II and III? If so, they are not a factor in those alternatives.

355-6 Page 3-94. A reference for the Sheldon mineral resource study would be helpful, including the date and author.

Page 4-5 correctly recognizes that wilderness recreation is spread out over a longer season than hunting use; the attached photos include hikes in February and November as well as the summer and spring months. This factor should be considered in any economic analysis of wilderness impacts. Wilderness recreation has the potential to bring a sustained, extended season of use and related business income to Lassen County. There are a lot of people in California who would travel through Susanville on their way to one of these ten proposed wildernesses.

Page 4-5 also correctly notes that wilderness would have a beneficial effect on cultural resource through greater protection from vehicle-facilitated destruction.

Page 4-130 has a good example of the kind of positive statement about wilderness complexes that should appear in other chapters under other alternatives and other WSA's. Particularly it should appear on p. 4-129 regarding the Skedaddles area. This is important to do for the record because people not in the TRT are unlikely to understand the reasoning for and advantages of maintaining the 4 3/4 mile commom boundary between the Skedaddles and Dry Valley Rim/Eagle Head, and possibly between adjacent units of the High Rock Complex. Although there may be other resource conflicts, they are outweighed by the benefit of having one large group of wilderness areas split only by a narrow road corridor, rather than two or three "island" wilderness areas where the continuity of wilderness is interrupted. Again, these benefits are maximized in the all-wilderness alternative and should be so stated.

Page 4-134. Compliments to Susanville BLM for proposing to add split estate and private land to the wilderness.

Page 4-135. No compliments to BLM for the assertion, "Wilderness would not significantly benefit any other resources." This is similar to other BLM statements that wilderness and multiple use are different. In truth, wilderness IS multiple use. It protects and enhances cultural resources, watershed, wildlife, fisheries (Wall Canyon sucker, for example), native vegetation (juniper woodlands), and scenery, for example.

355-6A Page 4 in Chapter 1 states that a criterion in the wilderness study is "expanding the diversity of natural systems through ecosystems and landforms." I do not see much evidence in the DEIS that ecosystem diversity was a factor in alternative development, particularly the preferred. There was a significant opportunity to add thousands of acres of juniper woodlands (western juniper) to the National Wilderness Preservation System, by recommending the Massacre Rim WSA; the DEIS should acknowledge this is each alternative. If there are any significant stands of juniper woodland in the Wall Canyon WSA core area, recommendation of it for wilderness would mitigate this opportunity lost.

355-7 Page 1-5 also lists a quality standard, as adequately considering public input from all segments, geographic areas and levels. BLM received letters supporting wilderness from hundreds of people in the 1979 inventory phase; has this input been considered in the study phase? Have all these people been notified of this DEIS?

355-8 Finally, in Chapters 2, 3 and 4, appear all too many references to the dire consequences of "outside sights and sounds"--from OUTSIDE the wilderness boundary. These alleged intrusions are used by BLM to reduce wilderness qualities and delete areas from wilderness suitability. This is one of the major failings of this DEIS. Congress and even BLM in Washington have made it clear that outside sights and sounds are usually little or no factor in wilderness study or management. The DEIS analysis should be redrafted on the subject of sights and sounds to be consistent with the Wilderness Study Policy page 5105. In my opinion, sights and sounds are not a factor against wilderness, nor against those outside sights and sounds (as in the case of the Sierra Army Depot. In all my visits to the Skedaddles and Dry Valley Rim/Eagle Head, I have never seen or heard any Depot activities of any kind, let alone been disturbed by them. The same is true of my visits to the other WSA's. Outside sights and sounds have never been a negative factor. In fact, I agree with BLM's Wilderness Study Policy, which quotes the House Report No. 95-540:

The "sights and sounds" of nearby Albuquerque, formerly considered a bar to wilderness designation by the Forest Service, should, on the contrary, heighten the public's awareness and appreciation of the area's outstanding wilderness values.

Page 4-137. "Unavoidable adverse impacts are the same as discussed in Chapter IV. Mitigation is built into the incorporation of specific actions." Neither sentence makes sense and both need rewording. Secondly, the paragraph fails to acknowledge the unavoidable adverse impacts that would result from loss of wilderness values in the non-suitable areas released fro non-wilderness uses and development.

Page 4-137. The third paragraph is incorrect in the "Relationship Between ...Uses" section. Only Alternatives I and II recommend wilderness for "over one-half the acreage." The 48,730 acre ACEC would only make the difference in Alternative III, if that is what is implied by "protection ... of other resource values." It should be explicit.

To further address the issue of possible effects of wilderness designation on the outside activities around the WSA of the Sierra Army Depot, and vice versa, I have attached a list of reasons to supplement the DEIS material on p. 2-97. In summary, such effects should not be a concern.

Thank you for considering these comments, and for the opportunity to participate in your District's wilderness review since 1977. It has been quite an educational and rewarding experience. I hope that the proposed wilderness moves swiftly through the BLM, Interior Department, and Congress, and that the land receives the wilderness protection it and our future generations deserve.

Sincerely, Curtis Spalding

Curtis Spalding

cc: Sen. Alan Cranston
Sen. Pete Wilson
Rep. Norman Shumway

COMMENTS ON PROPOSED SKEDADDLES WILDERNESS AND SIERRA ARMY DEPOT
May 1, 1985

In the technical review team, concerns were raised about possible effects on the Sierra Army Depot. These are thoroughly addressed on p. 2-95 through 2-97 in the DEIS, and should relieve most concerns.

o The concern was raised that air quality measures for wilderness would inhibit the Depot's operations. The Technical Review Team (TRT) studied this possibility and discussed it with the Depot's representative, Andy Reese, who attended the TRT meeting, and ruled it out. BLM wilderness would be Class II air quality category, and the Depot's operations meet Class II.

o The concern was raised that Depot operations would cause noise disturbance to wilderness users. But this is not the case. The TRT scaled back the proposed wilderness boundaries one mile from the detonation area boundary, so sounds are less audible. In any case, the detonations do not occur every day, rarely on weekends when people use the wilderness the most, and they are temporary, transitory phenomena that pass quickly, much like sonic booms or thunder. Not a problem.

o The concern was raised that there would be a public safety threat to wilderness users. Thi was studied and proved to be not a problem. Again, (1) the wilderness boundaries are scaled back one mile fo added margin of safety, and conform to the Lassen County public safety zone, and (2) no prior problems or complaints have been reported involving chukar hunters or motorcycle users who are immediately next to the Depot detonation area boundary, a mile closer than the proposed wilderness.

o The concern was raised that there would be a visual disturbance to wilderness users. This also proved not to be a problem, as (1) detonation clouds are transitory phenomena, and (2) with the new scaled-back boundaries, the Depot detonation site would not even be visible from the great majority (probably 95%) of the wilderness.

o The suggestion was made that wilderness would be incompatible with an Army Depot? Not necessariyy. In Southern California, it's reported that the China Lake Naval Air Station actually prefers wilderness under and near its Gunnery Range because wilderness precludes buildings and other incompatible structures and developments that would hinder military operations. Wilderness is almost a "no-man's land", especially the steep slopes of the Skedaddles facing the Depot, where few people would ever go.

o Wilderness, in fact, can enhance the protection of the Depot by securing part of its surrounding lands.

o "Landing of aircraft in wilderness can continue where such use occurred prior to establishment of area as wilderness." (BLM Brown Book p. 10).

o "Military use of Skedaddles/Amedee Mountains for security observation posts during sensitive operations could continue as per provisions of BLM Brown Book p. 10."

o Regarding possible expansion of the Depot, wilderness would again pose no proble because the steep slopes of the scaled-down Skedaddles propos wilderness proposal are not physically suited for Army Depot operations; vehicles would find it inaccessible; the land is BLM public land, not U.S. Army land. Army operations require one type of land, wilderness an entirely different type. No conflict.

o Procedures are already available for BLM to close off portions of a wilderness to public use and entry if there are reasons for such closures, such as public safety, national security, special operations, etc. This procedure imposes a "No-Entry Zone". This tool is available to the Depot during preparation of the wildernesss management plan by the BLM and I encourage its use at that time.

o In summary, from all available evidence, wilderness for the Skedaddles Area would have little or no effect on Sierra Army Depot or its continued operations or its possible expansion.

o Concerned individuals should study the maps to verify that this is indeed true. The maps will show that nearly all conflicts have been eliminated.

Response to Letter No. 355

355-1 There was no Energy/Minerals map prepared for the Wall Canyon WSA due to the lack of information to portray. The location of the few mining claims in the WSA is described in Chapter 3. Reference to Hays Canyon Range on the map titles has been changed to Wall Canyon in the FEIS.

355-2 Map 3-12 in the DEIS showed a vehicle access way which was the basis for deletion of this area. Field checking determined that this way does not receive regular vehicle use and, therefore, it has been deleted from Map 3-12 in the Final EIS. The area around the way, 315 acres, has been added to the suitable area in the proposed action and partial wilderness alternative.

This way is a portion of the Nobles Emigrant Trail which passes through the northeastern corner of the WSA for approximately 3 miles. The presence of the Emigrant Trail within the WSA has been noted within the Final EIS and shown on Map 3-12.

355-3 P.iii in the draft is a brief summary. Pages 1-9, 2-3 and 2-102 in the draft make it clear that the TRT did not reach a consensus for suitability on Wall Canyon WSA. We added clarification in the Final EIS on page 1-52 that the recommendation adopted is the BLM's.

355-4 The effect of designating all the WSAs you refer to as a complex is contained in the All Wilderness Alternative. The affect of the adjacent suitably recommended areas on wilderness was discussed in the Draft EIS, Chapter 4, Alternative VI, under the Skedaddle and Dry Valley Rim WSA's, Section I., Wilderness Values. It is also discussed under wilderness values for Skedaddle and Dry Rim in the Final EIS. Refer to response to comment letter 248-1 concerning WSA complexes.

355-5 The text has been changed to provide a legal location for the claims. The claims lay well beyond the boundary of the "core" area of the WSA.

355-6 The reference for the Sheldon mineral resource study has been added.

355-6A Presence or absences of juniper was not one of the criteria considered in the selection of the Proposed Action. Juniper is not listed as a separate ecotype under the Bailey/Kuchler classification. All 13 of the WSAs in this study are included in the sage brush step ecotype.

355-7 The mailing list used in this wilderness study process included those who responded during the wilderness inventory phase. Those files were reviewed and considered at the start of this process.

355-8 Refer to response 23-3.

SIERRA CLUB

330 Pennsylvania Avenue, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003 (202) 547-1141

June 24, 1985

Rex Cleary, District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
P.O. Box 1090
Susanville, CA 96130

Dear Rex,

In your draft wilderness EIS, BLM proposes a Skedaddle Mountains Wilderness. The Sierra Club strongly supports wilderness protection for the Skedaddles. We understand that this proposal has raised concerns about possible effects on the nearby Sierra Army Depot and its operations. We want to make clear our belief that the proposed wilderness would have no effect on Depot activities outside the wilderness boundary.

The Sierra Club has consistently testified that outside sights and sounds should not be a factor in wilderness studies and decisions. We have supported many wilderness designations from which one can see and hear nonwilderness activities. In California, the San Jacinto Wilderness overlooks a major interstate highway. Commercial airliners continuously fly over the Emigrant Wilderness on their way to San Francisco. And wilderness users in a number of southern California wilderness areas look down into the sprawling metropolis of Los Angeles.

Conversely, we do not expect the designation of a wilderness to effect activities on lands outside the wilderness boundary--particularly when those lands are already dedicated to another purpose, as are the lands of the Sierra Army Depot. These principles--that outside sights and sounds do not disqualify an area from consideration as wilderness, and that wilderness does not effect activities outside the wilderness boundary--are well established in the legislative history of wilderness designations.

The U.S. Forest Service has, on many occasions, clearcut timber right up to the boundaries of its designated wilderness areas. We cite this to show that the principle that the effect of a wilderness designation stops at its boundary is well established in practice as well as in theory.

The Sierra Club does not believe present Depot activities infringe on the wilderness user or the wilderness resources of the Skedaddles. Nor do we forsee any conflict between wilderness and any expansion of activities on Depot grounds in the future.

Sincerely yours,

Russell Shay
California/Nevada Representative

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BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
SUSANVILLE, CALIFORNIA

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JUN 27 1985
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
SUSANVILLE, CALIFORNIA

NORTHEAST CALIFORNIANS FOR WILDERNESS

P.O. Box 391
Susanville CA 96130

June 27, 1985

Mr. Rex Cleary
Susanville District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
705 Hall Street
Susanville CA 96130

Re: Eagle Lake/Cedarville Wilderness DEIS

Dear Mr. Cleary:

We are pleased to support the following Wilderness Study Areas for wilderness in the Susanville BLM District and at least these acreages:

Tunnison Mountain/Willow Creek	7,660 acres
Skedaddle Mountains	37,240 acres
Dry Valley Rim/Eagle Head	52,530 acres
Twin Peaks	54,970 acres
Wall Canyon	29,540 acres
Little High Rock	17,450 acres
High Rock Canyon	12,180 acres
E. Fork High Rock	33,620 acres
Sheldon Contiguous	780 acres
Massacre Rim	23,260 acres

Each of these unspoiled areas fully meets wilderness criteria; each provides outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive and unconfined recreation. Many also offer supplemental values such as unique cultural resources (High Rock Canyon complex), exceptional wildlife habitat (Skedaddles, High Rock Canyon), and wilderness complexes that provide mutual enhancement of their individual wilderness qualities (High Rock Canyon complex, Skedaddles/Eagle Head complex).

These areas are becomingly increasingly popular for nearly four-season recreation use. And yet they still offer excellent solitude opportunities in their great size and rugged topography. No acres should be deleted from any; if any changes are to be made, it should be to expand the High Rock Canyon uplands, and the Massacre Rim area to include the juniper woodland type.

The wilderness DEIS gives an overly narrow definition of wilderness qualities and wilderness uses. It neglects the indirect and vicarious uses of wilderness -- by people who may not actually visit the area but who nevertheless want to know it is there, unspoiled for future generations and a reminder of the American frontier. Any attempt to analyze total wilderness demand will be deficient if it fails to account for vicarious and indirect as well as direct uses.

As intangible but equally or more important are the spiritual values of wilderness. It reminds us that many of the problems in the world today are evidence that mankind needs more of the qualities of security, peace, and insight that wilderness provides. The natural world around us can best show us the lesson of endurance through self-sacrifice and acceptance, of creating and renewal instead of destruction and exploitation. We humans will eventually outgrow the need to exploit the wilderness, but we will ner outgrow the need to receive its gift.

The best thing we can do to these last remnants of natural land in this area is to leave as much of it as possible alone. Wilderness is the best way to assure this.

Thank you for considering these views.

Carl Schwarzenberg

Carl Schwarzenberg

Attached are petitions with approximately 60 different signatures supporting wilderness for the above areas. Please accept these as evidence that people both who have visited these areas and people who simply enjoy them from a distance consider these 10 areas fully suitable for wilderness and urge you to make a similar determination.

In addition, although they have not received wilderness recommendation, we believe the remaining three areas have the required qualities to be recommended as wilderness also, and urge you to give them such protection: Five Springs Mountain (an outstanding and accessible backpacking area for families); Buffalo Hills (a diverse, challenging, and well-watered area with fine backcountry campsites and many day hikes); and Yellow Rock Canyon, an integral part of the High Rock Canyon complex. Finally, BLM should change its recommendation on Wall Canyon to suitable for wilderness for the 29,000 acre core area that admittedly has no resource conflicts,and well-documented wilderness qualities (see BLM's Intensive Wilderness Inventory).

California Wilderness Coalition

2655 Portage Bay Avenue, Suite 3 • Davis, California 95616 • (916) 758-0380

370

June 2[illegible], 1985

Dept. of Interior
RECEIVED
[illegible] 1985
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
SUSANVILLE, CALIFORNIA

C. Rex Cleary, District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
P.O. Box 1090
Susanville, CA 96130

Dear Rex:

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the draft environmental impact statement for the wilderness study areas located in the Eagle Lake and Surprise resource areas in the Susanville District of the Bureau of Land Managment. After reviewing the document, the Board of Directors of the California Wilderness Coalition has determined that the best option is Alternative I, the all wilderness alternative.

We also feel that the draft environmental impact statement is inadequate. Most of the non-suitable recommendations are based on several often-repeated fallacies. The maps, however, are the best we have seen in such a document and deserve special mention.

370-1 The range of alternatives does not represent a reasonable range of alternatives. Aside from the all wilderness and no wilderness alternatives, three of the four alternatives propose less than 50 percent of the WSA acreage as suitable, and the other alternative recommends just 67 percent as suitable.

It was disturbing to us that written notice of the public hearings was not sent out until we pointed out that such notice was required by the National Environmental Policy Act. The low attendance at the hearings may have been due to the late written notice which was mailed less than two weeks prior to the hearings.

370-2 The fallacies are considered in detail in specific comments on the environmental impact statement. They fall into several categories, especially sights and sounds outside the wilderness study areas (WSAs), inability of the Bureau of Land Management to control off-road vehicles, presence of private lands, and potential utility corridors.

370-3 We also can find no evidence that detailed wilderness studies were conducted on the WSAs. Most of the information in the environmental impact statement would have been available without any field work. As has been recently discovered in the Rocky Creek-Cache Creek WSA, close examination of an area may reveal remarkable wilderness and wildlife values perviously unknown. We would like to see detailed studies conducted in each WSA.

370-4 The California Wilderness Coalition believes that the values of a wilderness complex that includes the Skedaddle Mountain, Dry Valley Rim, Five Springs, Twin Peaks, and Buffalo Hills WSAs should have analyzed. We also protested lands that were eliminated from wilderness study that would add to this complex. The fact

that 350,000 acres of wild lands are contiguous across primitive roads is quite significant and should have been considered in the environmental impact statement.

The following are our specific comments on the draft environmental impact statement for the wilderness study areas located in the Eagle Lake and Surprise resource areas in the Susanville District of the Bureau of Land Managment. We have limited our comments to those areas partially or entirely within the State of California, but most of the comments also would apply to the WSAs entirely within Nevada.

Cover sheet: The page indicating that this is a draft environmental impact statement with the abstract incorrectly states that the recommendations are for the Timbered Crater WSA and Lava WSA.

Page 2-7, fourth paragraph: It is stated that off-site sights and sounds from motor vehicles, trains, and agricultural activities on private lands may degrade opportunities for solitude. Congress has made it clear that this is not an important criterion for wilderness designation. Almost all wilderness areas are affected by overflights by aircraft. The Castle Crags Wilderness is about one mile from Interstate 5 and the main north-south railway line in California. The San Jacinto Wilderness is about two miles from Interstate 10, a major freeway linking Los Angeles with Palm Springs. The two parts of the Yosemite Wilderness are separated by State Highway 120. The wilderness study areas under consideration in this environmental impact statement are subject to far less disturbance from off-site sights and sounds.

Page 2-7, fifth paragraph: The statement that parts of the WSA could not be effectively managed due to the rolling terrain is in error. If the Tunnison Mountain area were designated as wilderness by Congress, it would be the responsibility of the Bureau of Land Management to control vehicle use within the area. Vehicle use would be illegal. One would assume that law-abiding citizens would respect wilderness boundary signs.

Other agencies are able to manage wilderness areas with rolling terrain, such as the Lava Beds Wilderness. If an area is designated as wilderness by an act of Congress, it does not matter if the terrain is steep or flat. The Bureau of Land Management will be responsible for preventing illegal use of the area by vehicles just as they are responsible for upholding other laws.

Page 2-8, sixth paragraph: If Congress designated the Five Springs WSA as wilderness, then the open country in the wilderness would not be "where wilderness values are relatively low." All parts of a wilderness are protected by law. If an area is designated as wilderness by an act of Congress, it does not matter if the terrain is steep or flat. The Bureau of Land Management will be responsible for preventing illegal use of the area by vehicles just as they are responsible for upholding other laws.

Page 2-9, second paragraph: Numerous possible routes for a trans-Sierra utility corridor have been identified. One route exists which would not pass through any WSA. Until a preferred route is chosen, the fact that a utility corridor has been identified through a portion of a wilderness study area is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-10, first paragraph: It is stated that off-site sights and sounds from motor vehicles, aircraft landings, motorcycle riding, trains, a power plant, and an ammunitions demolition area may degrade opportunities for solitude. Congress has made it clear that this is not an important criterion for wilderness designation. The fact that a portion of a wilderness study area is affected by off-site sights and sounds is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-10, third paragraph: If an area is designated as wilderness by an act of Congress, it does not matter if the terrain is steep or flat. The Bureau of Land Management will be responsible for preventing illegal use of the area by vehicles just as they are responsible for upholding other laws.

Page 2-10, fifth paragraph: Numerous possible routes for a trans-Sierra utility corridor have been identified. Until a preferred route is chosen, the fact that a utility corridor has been identified through a portion of a wilderness study area is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-11, seventh paragraph: It is stated that off-site sights and sounds from trains and an ammunitions demolition area may degrade opportunities for solitude. Congress has made it clear that this is not an important criterion for wilderness designation. The fact that a portion of a wilderness study area is affected by off-site sights and sounds is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-12, second paragraph: If an area is designated as wilderness by an act of Congress, it does not matter if the terrain is steep or flat. The Bureau of Land Management will be responsible for preventing illegal use of the area by vehicles just as they are responsible for upholding other laws.

Page 2-13, third paragraph: If an area is designated as wilderness by an act of Congress, it does not matter if the terrain is steep or flat. The Bureau of Land Management will be responsible for preventing illegal use of the area by vehicles just as they are responsible for upholding other laws.

Page 2-13, fifth paragraph: Numerous possible routes for a trans-Sierra utility corridor have been identified. Until a preferred route is chosen, the fact that a utility corridor has been identified through a portion of a wilderness study area is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-14, third paragraph: If an area is designated as wilderness by an act of Congress, it does not matter if the terrain is steep or flat. The Bureau of Land Management will be responsible for preventing illegal use of the area by vehicles just as they are responsible for upholding other laws.

Page 2-15, first paragraph: Numerous possible routes for a trans-Sierra utility corridor have been identified. Until a preferred route is chosen, the fact that a utility corridor has been identified through a portion of a wilderness study area is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-24, fourth paragraph: The fact that a portion of a wilderness study area is affected by off-site sights and sounds is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-24, fourth paragraph: Private inholdings are allowed in a wilderness area. The Bureau of Land Management would be encouraged to acquire such inholdings through an exchange, but the fact that private lands exist in a wilderness study area is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-25, second paragraph: Numerous possible routes for a trans-Sierra utility corridor have been identified. Until a preferred route is chosen, the fact that a utility corridor has been identified through a portion of a wilderness study area is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-25, second paragraph: If an area is designated as wilderness by an act of Congress, it does not matter if the terrain is steep or flat. The Bureau of Land Management will be responsible for preventing illegal use of the area by vehicles just as they are responsible for upholding other laws. The fact that an area has open rolling terrain is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-26, third paragraph: Numerous possible routes for a trans-Sierra utility corridor have been identified. Until a preferred route is chosen, the fact that a utility corridor has been identified through a portion of a wilderness study area is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-27, sixth paragraph: The fact that a portion of a wilderness study area is affected by off-site sights and sounds is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-28, fourth paragraph: Numerous possible routes for a trans-Sierra utility corridor have been identified. Until a preferred route is chosen, the fact that a utility corridor has been identified through a portion of a wilderness study area is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-29, sixth paragraph: The fact that a portion of a wilderness study area is affected by off-site sights and sounds is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-30, first paragraph: Numerous possible routes for a trans-Sierra utility corridor have been identified. Until a preferred route is chosen, the fact that a utility corridor has been identified through a portion of a wilderness study area is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-30, third paragraph: If an area is designated as wilderness by an act of Congress, it does not matter if the terrain is steep or flat. The Bureau of Land Management will be responsible for preventing illegal use of the area by vehicles just as they are responsible for upholding other laws. The fact that an

area has open rolling terrain is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-31, fourth paragraph: If an area is designated as wilderness by an act of Congress, it does not matter if the terrain is steep or flat. The Bureau of Land Management will be responsible for preventing illegal use of the area by vehicles just as they are responsible for upholding other laws. The fact that an area has open rolling terrain is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-33, first paragraph: Private inholdings are allowed in a wilderness area. The Bureau of Land Management would be encouraged to acquire such inholdings through an exchange, but the fact that private lands exist in a wilderness study area is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-33, second paragraph: Numerous possible routes for a trans-Sierra utility corridor have been identified. Until a preferred route is chosen, the fact that a utility corridor has been identified through a portion of a wilderness study area is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-41, first paragraph: The fact that a portion of a wilderness study area is affected by off-site sights and sounds is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-42, second paragraph: If an area is designated as wilderness by an act of Congress, it does not matter if the terrain is steep or flat. The Bureau of Land Management will be responsible for preventing illegal use of the area by vehicles just as they are responsible for upholding other laws. The fact that an area has open rolling terrain is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-42, fourth paragraph: Numerous possible routes for a trans-Sierra utility corridor have been identified. Until a preferred route is chosen, the fact that a utility corridor has been identified through a portion of a wilderness study area is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-43, third paragraph: If an area is designated as wilderness by an act of Congress, it does not matter if the terrain is steep or flat. The Bureau of Land Management will be responsible for preventing illegal use of the area by vehicles just as they are responsible for upholding other laws. The fact that an area has open rolling terrain is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-44, third paragraph: The fact that a portion of a wilderness study area is affected by off-site sights and sounds is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-44, eighth paragraph: Numerous possible routes for a trans-Sierra utility corridor have been identified. Until a preferred route is chosen, the fact that a utility corridor has been identified through a portion of a wilderness study

area is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-46, third paragraph: The fact that a portion of a wilderness study area is affected by off-site sights and sounds is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-46, fifth paragraph: Numerous possible routes for a trans-Sierra utility corridor have been identified. Until a preferred route is chosen, the fact that a utility corridor has been identified through a portion of a wilderness study area is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-49, second paragraph: Private inholdings are allowed in a wilderness area. The Bureau of Land Management would be encouraged to acquire such inholdings through an exchange, but the fact that private lands exist in a wilderness study area is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-49, third paragraph: Numerous possible routes for a trans-Sierra utility corridor have been identified. Until a preferred route is chosen, the fact that a utility corridor has been identified through a portion of a wilderness study area is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-59, fourth paragraph: The fact that a portion of a wilderness study area is affected by off-site sights and sounds is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-60, fourth paragraph: Numerous possible routes for a trans-Sierra utility corridor have been identified. Until a preferred route is chosen, the fact that a utility corridor has been identified through a portion of a wilderness study area is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-63, fourth paragraph: Numerous possible routes for a trans-Sierra utility corridor have been identified. Until a preferred route is chosen, the fact that a utility corridor has been identified through a portion of a wilderness study area is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-75, fourth paragraph: The fact that a portion of a wilderness study area is affected by off-site sights and sounds is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-76, sixth paragraph: The fact that a portion of a wilderness study area is affected by off-site sights and sounds is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-78, first paragraph: Numerous possible routes for a trans-Sierra utility corridor have been identified. Until a preferred route is chosen, the fact that a utility corridor has been identified through a portion of a wilderness study area is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-78, seventh paragraph: The fact that a portion of a wilderness study area is affected by off-site sights and sounds is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-79, fourth paragraph: Numerous possible routes for a trans-Sierra utility corridor have been identified. Until a preferred route is chosen, the fact that a utility corridor has been identified through a portion of a wilderness study area is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-81, fourth paragraph: Numerous possible routes for a trans-Sierra utility corridor have been identified. Until a preferred route is chosen, the fact that a utility corridor has been identified through a portion of a wilderness study area is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-95, second paragraph: Private inholdings are allowed in a wilderness area. The Bureau of Land Management would be encouraged to acquire such inholdings through an exchange, but the fact that private lands exist in a wilderness study area is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-95, third paragraph: If an area is designated as wilderness by an act of Congress, it does not matter if the terrain is steep or flat. The Bureau of Land Management will be responsible for preventing illegal use of the area by vehicles just as they are responsible for upholding other laws. The fact that an area has open rolling terrain is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation. Also, if the Bureau of Land Management is unable to control off-road vehicles, archaeological values may well be threatened in the area as acknowledged on Page 4-5.

Page 2-95, fifth paragraph: The fact that motorized access currently occurs in portions of the area is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation. Page 2-95, sixth paragraph: Since the non-suitable recommendation is based on faulty premises, a good wilderness boundary may be found. Page 2-95, seventh paragraph: The fact that four of six other WSAs have had portions recommended as suitable has no bearing whatsoever on the suitability of the Five Springs WSA. Opportunities for hunter use without motorized restrictions exist on more than 1.7 million acres in the Susanville District alone; millions of additional acres are available for such use in adjacent BLM districts and national forests.

Page 2-97, sixth paragraph: If an area is designated as wilderness by an act of Congress, it does not matter if the terrain is steep or flat. The Bureau of Land Management will be responsible for preventing illegal use of the area by vehicles just as they are responsible for upholding other laws. The fact that an area has open rolling terrain is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-97, eight paragraph: The fact that a portion of a wilderness study area is affected by off-site sights and sounds is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-97, ninth paragraph: If an area is designated as wilderness by an act of Congress, it does not matter if the terrain is steep or flat. The Bureau of Land Management will be responsible for preventing illegal use of the area by vehicles just as they are responsible for upholding other laws. The fact that an area has open rolling terrain is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-99, sixth paragraph: If an area is designated as wilderness by an act of Congress, it does not matter if the terrain is steep or flat. The Bureau of Land Management will be responsible for preventing illegal use of the area by vehicles just as they are responsible for upholding other laws. The fact that an area has open rolling terrain is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-99, seventh paragraph: Numerous possible routes for a trans-Sierra utility corridor have been identified. Until a preferred route is chosen, the fact that a utility corridor has been identified through a portion of a wilderness study area is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-99, eighth paragraph: The fact that a portion of a wilderness study area is affected by off-site sights and sounds is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-99, ninth paragraph: Opportunities for hunter use without motorized restrictions exist on more than 1.7 million acres in the Susanville District alone; millions of additions acres are available for such use in adjacent BLM districts and national forests.

Page 2-100, third paragraph: If an area is designated as wilderness by an act of Congress, it does not matter if the terrain is steep or flat. The Bureau of Land Management will be responsible for preventing illegal use of the area by vehicles just as they are responsible for upholding other laws. The fact that an area has open rolling terrain is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-100, fourth paragraph: Private inholdings are allowed in a wilderness area. The Bureau of Land Management would be encouraged to acquire such inholdings through an exchange, but the fact that private lands exist in a wilderness study area is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-101, eleventh paragraph: Opportunities for hunter use without motorized restrictions exist on more than 1.7 million acres in the Susanville District alone; millions of additions acres are available for such use in adjacent BLM districts and national forests.

Page 2-102, first paragraph: Opportunities for hunter use without motorized restrictions exist on more than 1.7 million acres in the Susanville District alone; millions of additions acres are available for such use in adjacent BLM districts and national forests.

Page 2-102, second paragraph: Numerous possible routes for a trans-Sierra utility corridor have been identified. Until a preferred route is chosen, the fact that a utility corridor has been identified through a portion of a wilderness study area is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 2-102, third paragraph: Opportunities for hunter use without motorized restrictions exist on more than 1.7 million acres in the Susanville District alone; millions of additions acres are available for such use in adjacent BLM districts and national forests.

Page 3-12, fourth paragraph: Congress has made it clear that outside influences such as sights and sounds are not important criteria for wilderness designation. Even with some disturbances on the perimeter of the wilderness study area the are retains opportunities for solitude and a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

Page 3-27, fifth paragraph: Congress has made it clear that outside influences such as sights and sounds are not important criteria for wilderness designation. Even with some disturbances on the perimeter of the wilderness study area the are retains opportunities for solitude and a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

Page 3-28, fifth paragraph: Any motorized use in the WSA occuring after wilderness designation would be illegal.

Page 3-29, second paragraph: Congress has made it clear that outside influences such as sights and sounds are not important criteria for wilderness designation. Even with some disturbances on the perimeter of the wilderness study area the are retains opportunities for solitude and a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

Page 3-37, fifth paragraph: Congress has made it clear that outside influences such as sights and sounds are not important criteria for wilderness designation. Even with some disturbances on the perimeter of the wilderness study area the are retains opportunities for solitude and a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

Page 3-38, fourth paragraph: Congress has made it clear that outside influences such as sights and sounds are not important criteria for wilderness designation. Even with some disturbances on the perimeter of the wilderness study area the are retains opportunities for solitude and a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

Page 4-1, second paragraph: The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 requires the Secretary of the Interior to review these wilderness study areas by 1991. It further requires the President to report to Congress within two years after receiving the report from the Secretary. There is no time limit imposed upon Congress to act on these recommendations. Therefore we cannot see any justification for a basic assumption that designation or non-designation of each WSA will take place within the next five years. Page 4-2, third paragraph: Congress has made it clear that outside influences such as sights and sounds are not important criteria for wilderness designation. Even with some disturbances on the perimeter

of the wilderness study area the are retains opportunities for solitude and a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

Page 4-3, third paragraph: Vehicle use would be illegal. One would assume that law-abiding citizens would respect wilderness boundary signs. Nevertheless, the Bureau of Land Management will be responsible for preventing illegal use of the area by vehicles just as they are responsible for upholding other laws. Abandoning all lands that do not have "self-protecting" terrain is poor management, wilderness or not.

Page 4-7, third paragraph: Vehicle use would be illegal. One would assume that law-abiding citizens would respect wilderness boundary signs. Nevertheless, the Bureau of Land Management will be responsible for preventing illegal use of the area by vehicles just as they are responsible for upholding other laws. Abandoning all lands that do not have "self-protecting" terrain is poor management, wilderness or not.

Page 4-11, sixth paragraph: Congress has made it clear that outside influences such as sights and sounds are not important criteria for wilderness designation. Even with some disturbances on the perimeter of the wilderness study area the are retains opportunities for solitude and a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

Page 4-11, seventh paragraph: Congress has made it clear that outside influences such as sights and sounds are not important criteria for wilderness designation. Even with some disturbances on the perimeter of the wilderness study area the are retains opportunities for solitude and a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

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Page 4-12, fourth paragraph: Vehicle use would be illegal. One would assume that law-abiding citizens would respect wilderness boundary signs. Nevertheless, the Bureau of Land Management will be responsible for preventing illegal use of the area by vehicles just as they are responsible for upholding other laws. Abandoning all lands that do not have "self-protecting" terrain is poor management, wilderness or not.

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Page 4-17, third paragraph: Congress has made it clear that outside influences such as sights and sounds are not important criteria for wilderness designation. Even with some disturbances on the perimeter of the wilderness study area the are retains opportunities for solitude and a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

Page 4-18, first paragraph: Vehicle use would be illegal. One would assume that law-abiding citizens would respect wilderness boundary signs. Nevertheless, the Bureau of Land Management will be responsible for preventing illegal use of the area by vehicles just as they are responsible for upholding other laws. Abandoning all lands that do not have "self-protecting" terrain is poor management, wilderness or not.

Page 4-22, seventh paragraph: Congress has made it clear that outside influences such as sights and sounds are not important criteria for wilderness designation. Even with some disturbances on the perimeter of the wilderness study area the are retains opportunities for solitude and a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

Page 4-23, first paragraph: Private inholdings are allowed in a wilderness area. Most wilderness areas have private lands within their boundaries. The Bureau of Land Management would be encouraged to acquire such inholdings through an exchange.

Page 4-23, second paragraph: Vehicle use would be illegal. One would assume that law-abiding citizens would respect wilderness boundary signs. Nevertheless, the Bureau of Land Management will be responsible for preventing illegal use of the area by vehicles just as they are responsible for upholding other laws. Abandoning all lands that do not have "self-protecting" terrain is poor management, wilderness or not.

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Page 4-53, fourth paragraph: Congress has made it clear that outside influences such as sights and sounds are not important criteria for wilderness designation. Even with some disturbances on the perimeter of the wilderness study area the are retains opportunities for solitude and a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

Page 4-54, first paragraph: Numerous possible routes for a trans-Sierra utility corridor have been identified. Until a preferred route is chosen, the fact that a utility corridor has been identified through a portion of a wilderness study area is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 4-56, first paragraph: Congress has made it clear that outside influences such as sights and sounds are not important criteria for wilderness designation. Even with some disturbances on the perimeter of the wilderness study area the are retains opportunities for solitude and a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

Page 4-56, second paragraph: If an area is designated as wilderness by an act of Congress, it does not matter if the terrain is steep or flat. The Bureau of Land Management will be responsible for preventing illegal use of the area by vehicles just as they are responsible for upholding other laws. The fact that an area has open rolling terrain is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 4-58, fifth paragraph: Congress has made it clear that outside influences such as sights and sounds are not important criteria for wilderness designation. Even with some disturbances on the perimeter of the wilderness study area the are retains opportunities for solitude and a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

Page 4-58, sixth paragraph: Congress has made it clear that outside influences such as sights and sounds are not important criteria for wilderness designation. Even with some disturbances on the perimeter of the wilderness study area the are retains opportunities for solitude and a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

Page 4-62, fifth paragraph: Congress has made it clear that outside influences such as sights and sounds are not important criteria for wilderness designation. Even with some disturbances on the perimeter of the wilderness study area the are retains opportunities for solitude and a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

Page 4-66, second paragraph: Private inholdings are allowed in a wilderness area. Most wilderness areas have private lands within their boundaries. The Bureau of Land Management would be encouraged to acquire such inholdings through an exchange.

Page 4-66, third paragraph: Vehicle use would be illegal. One would assume that law-abiding citizens would respect wilderness boundary signs. Nevertheless, the Bureau of Land Management will be responsible for preventing illegal use of the area by vehicles just as they are responsible for upholding other laws. Abandoning all lands that do not have "self-protecting" terrain is poor management, wilderness or not.

Page 4-69, first paragraph: Private inholdings are allowed in a wilderness area. Most wilderness areas have private lands within their boundaries. The Bureau of Land Management would be encouraged to acquire such inholdings through an exchange.

Page 4-82, fourth paragraph: Congress has made it clear that outside influences such as sights and sounds are not important criteria for wilderness designation. Even with some disturbances on the perimeter of the wilderness study area the are retains opportunities for solitude and a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

Page 4-83, seventh paragraph: Our comments regarding Alternative II for the Five Springs WSA apply here as well.

Page 4-84, second paragraph: Our comments regarding Alternative II for the Skedaddle Mountains WSA apply here as well.

Page 4-85, sixth paragraph: If an area is designated as wilderness by an act of Congress, it does not matter if the terrain is steep or flat. The Bureau of Land Management will be responsible for preventing illegal use of the area by vehicles just as they are responsible for upholding other laws. The fact that an area has open rolling terrain is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Page 4-85, sixth paragraph: Our comments regarding Alternative II for the Dry Valley Rim WSA apply here as well.

Page 4-87, third paragraph: Our comments regarding Alternative II for the Buffalo Hills WSA apply here as well.

Page 4-88, tenth paragraph: Our comments regarding Alternative II for the Twin Peaks WSA apply here as well.

Page 4-106, eight paragraph: Our comments regarding Alternative III for the Skedaddle Mountains WSA apply here as well.

Page 4-107, second paragraph: Congress has made it clear that outside influences such as sights and sounds are not important criteria for wilderness designation. Even with some disturbances on the perimeter of the wilderness study area the are retains opportunities for solitude and a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

Page 4-111, third paragraph: Our comments regarding Alternative III for the Twin Peaks WSA apply here as well.

Page 4-128, first paragraph: Our comments regarding Alternative III for the Tunnison Mountain WSA apply here as well.

Page 4-128, fourth paragraph: Our comments regarding Alternative IV for the Skedaddle Mountains WSA apply here as well.

Page 4-130, sixth paragraph: Our comments regarding Alternative II for the Dry Valley Rim WSA apply here as well.

Page 4-132, fourth paragraph: Our comments regarding Alternative IV for the Twin Peaks WSA apply here as well.

Page 4-132, fourth paragraph: Numerous possible routes for a trans-Sierra utility corridor have been identified. Until a preferred route is chosen, the fact that a utility corridor has been identified through a portion of a wilderness study area is no justification for recommending that portion as non-suitable for wilderness designation.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the draft environmental impact statement for the wilderness study areas located in the Eagle Lake and Surprise resource areas in the Susanville District of the Bureau of Land Managment.

Sincerely,

Jim

Jim Eaton
Executive Director

Response to Letter No. 370

The California Wilderness Coalition letter is divided into two parts: general and specific comments. The specific comments addressed in each WSA are summarized in the general comment. Therefore response 370-2 that addresses the general comment, addresses the essence of each specific comment.

370-1 The range of alternatives was decided not by a subjective gradation of percentages, but by how well the alternatives address the issues. For each WSA at least one partial wilderness alternative was developed that represent various approaches to protection of wilderness resource values and possible conflicts with resource productivity.

370-2 Outside sights and sounds and manageability are not environmental issues for wilderness study and both have been deleted from the final EIS as issues. Manageability is a planning consideration that was used in determining boundaries for the partial alternatives.

The WSA's are currently being managed not as wilderness, but in a manner to insure that wilderness values will not be compromised prior to a decision by Congress. This interim management includes patrols and denial of wilderness impairing projects. Interim management in many cases is more restrictive than management of designated wilderness areas.

Problems in controlling use of off road vehicles result from ineffective boundaries. We are recognizing that an impact will occur when the boundary of an alternative does not have the characteristics inherent in a manageable boundary. These characteristics are: 1. Does the boundary naturally restrict prohibited uses? 2. It is easily recognizable to the public? An ideal situation is a ridge line or stream channel. Manageable boundaries can do much to lessen the amount of time and resources you have to spend preventing or enforcing violations of the boundary. These resources can better be spent of producing good maps, maintaining trails and providing information and interpretation to the public.

Private inholdings and potential utility corridor potential are both topics that must be included in a wilderness study in order to understand impacts on the resource. They both involve potential alternate use of public land for access and right-of-ways.

370-3 A wilderness study is the second step in the Bureau of Land Management's process of making recommendations on wilderness suitability as mandated by Section 603 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA). The first step was the inventory stage which involved extensive field inventory during 1978 and 1979. We also conducted extensive field inventories in the Susanville District on other resource categories for the Tuledad Homecamp, Cowhead Massacre, Cal Neva and Willow Creek Grazing EISs. This information was

utilized in the wilderness study. Information on mineral values will also be added to by the extensive field surveys being done by the U.S. Geological Survey and Bureau of Mines. This is also mandated by Section 603 of FLPMA to be completed on the suitable areas. We feel that the level of detail in this study is as extensive and as comprehensive as appropriate for the EIS.

370-4 The effect of designating all the WSA's you refer to as a complex is contained in the All Wilderness Alternative. Refer to Reply to Response Letter No. 248-1.

United States Department of the Interior 376

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
RESTON, VA. 22092

In Reply Refer To:
WGS-Mail Stop 423

JUN 26 1985

Memorandum

To: District Manager, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Susanville, California

From: Assistant Director for Engineering Geology

Subject: Review of draft environmental statement for Eagle Lakes - Cedarville Study Areas, preliminary wilderness recommendations, Lassen County, California, and Washoe and Humboldt Counties, Nevada

We have reviewed the statement as requested by the Susanville BLM District Advisory Council.

376-1 Of paramount concern are the wilderness suitability decisions about Massacre Rim. The areas of highest mineral potential are recommended for wilderness designation in the preferred alternative. See map 2-33 in comparison with mineral resources, map 3-36. The description on p. 3-100 indicates a possible classic auriferous jasperoid environment. BLM should be fully aware of the area's potential before making their wilderness recommendations.

376-2 The reasons given for "zero petroleum potential" described on p. 3-69, 3-76, 3-89, should be reconsidered. The absence of surviving hydrocarbons because of high temperatures may not be a valid conclusion. For example, the Salton Trough contains natural gas on the margins of the geothermal field.

J R Rollo
for James F. Devine

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SUSANVILLE DISTRICT
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BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
SUSANVILLE, CALIFORNIA

Response to Letter No. 376

376-1 The potential for mineral development has been considered for the Massacre Rim WSA with management actions identified for the Proposed Action and each alternative described on pages 169-187 in Chapter 2. The impacts on mineral resource development are identified in Chapter 4.

476-2 The potential petroleum resources are identified based on the Barringer Report which compares the characteristics of the geology of the WSAs with the characteristics within the region. While the absence of surviving hydrocarbons is not always indicative of a lack of petroleum resources, in this case it appears to be a valid conclusion relative to the regional geology. Additionally, refer to 257-1.

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION IX
215 Fremont Street
San Francisco, Ca. 94105

378

To		Initial	Date
	SD		
	ASD		
	ADMIN		
	RES		
	OPER		
	PA		
	Minerals		
	EEO		

Action by
Surname by
Return to

JUN 27 1985

Edward L. Hastey, State Director
U.S. Bureau of Land Management
California State Office
Room E2853
2800 Cottage Way
Sacramento, California 95825

Dear Mr. Hastey:

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) titled PRELIMINARY WILDERNESS RECOMMENDATIONS, EAGLE LAKE CEDARVILLE STUDY AREAS; LASSEN COUNTY, CALIFORNIA AND WASHOE AND HUMBOLDT COUNTIES, NEVADA. We have the enclosed comments regarding this DEIS.

This DEIS is a very good treatment of Wilderness Study Area (WSA) environmental issues. Generally, EPA concurs with the Bureau of Land Management's choice of Alternative 6 as the preferred alternative. However, we have classified this DEIS as Category EC-2, Environmental Concerns - Insufficient Information (see attached "Summary of Rating Definitions and Follow-Up Action").

This DEIS is rated EC-2 because clarification of WSA recommendations is requested, certain features described in the DEIS need to be included in the WSA maps, and information on water quality within the study area should be included as reference data for future site specific evaluations. The classification and date of EPA's comments will be published in the Federal Register in accordance with our public disclosure responsibilities under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this DEIS. Please send five copies of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) to this office at the same time it is officially filed with our Washington, D.C. office. If you have any questions, please contact Patrick J. Cotter, Federal Activities Branch, at (415) 974-0948 or FTS 454-0948.

Sincerely yours,

Charles W. Murray, Jr.
Assistant Regional Administrator
for Policy and Management

cc: Mr. Larry Teeter, Wilderness Coodinator, BLM, Susanville, CA

Enclosure (3 pages)

General Comments

378-1 Establishment of wilderness areas can benefit other resource and environmental values such as water quality and air quality. Designation of suitable land as "wilderness areas" tends to be environmentally preferable since it often affords a greater level of environmental protection. Accordingly, we have the following comments about the wilderness selection criteria in the DEIS.

378-2 The rationale for the Bureau of Land Management's "nonsuitable" declaration for certain sections or all of some Wilderness Study Areas (WSA) is unclear. The discussion of Alternative III, based on the removal of areas with resource conflicts and manageability conflicts, indicates that WSAs listed as unsuitable in the Alternative VI (the Preferred Alternative) "could be managed as wilderness" (pp. 2-85 to 2-88, 2-87 to 2-90). The specific WSAs include Five Springs, Buffalo Hills, Yellow Rock and, in particular, Wall Canyon and Massacre Rim.

EPA recommends that the FEIS contain further discussion regarding why the WSA portions noted above were not recommended as wilderness.

Water Quality Comments

1. The FEIS should provide water quality information for generic water resources in the study area. The discussion should address management plans and mitigation measures to protect water quality of:

   a. Springs and wells,
   b. Ponds and reservoirs,
   c. Perennial streams and hydrographic basins, and
   d. Riparian communities.

2. A similar format for the tabular listing of water resources displayed in section "III. Livestock Grazing, B. Range Development" for the Eagle Lake WSAs should be included in the discussions for the Cedarville WSAs.

3. Map products and accompanying descriptions in the DEIS are very useful and provide a great deal of information. EPA recommends that the WSA maps in the FEIS include the following additional information:

   a. all major riparian communities,
   b. areas of sensitive biological habitat that may require mitigation measures to reduce potential environmental impacts,
   c. the location of wells listed in section "III. Livestock Grazing" for each WSA,

d. All Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) that may be be designated, and
e. Utility corridor realignments that prevent conflicts with WSA designations.

Pesticide Comments

Table 2-1 refers to potential vegetation and insect suppression methods as part of the management plan (pp. 2-4, 2-5). Certain WSAs, including Little High Rock, Sheldon Contiguous, and Massacre Rim, have been included in a previous herbicide spray program. EPA recommends that the FEIS discuss potential pesticide usage for recreation, range and wildlife management plans.

378-3 This discussion should be contained in a specific section of the FEIS devoted to the pesticide use including pesticides used for insect and vegetation control, application rates, application procedures and treatment areas. Any pesticides used must be registered with the Environmental Protection Agency and the appropriate State agency. All applicable State regulations, label directions and instructions must be followed. In addition, because the regulatory status of pesticides changes, EPA recommends that a review of each chemical's current regulatory status be made prior to application.

SUMMARY OF RATING DEFINITIONS AND FOLLOW-UP ACTION*

Environmental Impact of the Action

LO--Lack of Objections
The EPA review has not identified any potential environmental impacts requiring substantive changes to the proposal. The review may have disclosed opportunities for application of mitigation measures that could be accomplished with no more than minor changes to the proposal.

EC--Environmental Concerns
The EPA review has identified environmental impacts that should be avoided in order to fully protect the environment. Corrective measures may require changes to the preferred alternative or application of mitigation measures that can reduce the environmental impact. EPA would like to work with the lead agency to reduce these impacts.

EO--Environmental Objections
The EPA review has identified significant environmental impacts that must be avoided in order to provide adequate protection for the environment. Corrective measures may require substantial changes to the preferred alternative or consideration of some other project alternative (including the no action alternative or a new alternative). EPA intends to work with the lead agency to reduce these impacts.

EU--Environmentally Unsatisfactory
The EPA review has identified adverse environmental impacts that are of sufficient magnitude that they are unsatisfactory from the standpoint of public health or welfare or environmental quality. EPA intends to work with the lead agency to reduce these impacts. If the potential unsatisfactory impacts are not corrected at the final EIS stage, this proposal will be recommended for referral to the CEQ.

Adequacy of the Impact Statement

Category 1--Adequate
EPA believes the draft EIS adequately sets forth the environmental impact(s) of the preferred alternative and those of the alternatives reasonably available to the project or action. No further analysis or data collection is necessary, but the reviewer may suggest the addition of clarifying language or information.

Category 2--Insufficient Information
The draft EIS does not contain sufficient information for EPA to fully assess environmental impacts that should be avoided in order to fully protect the environment, or the EPA reviewer has identified new reasonably available alternatives that are within the spectrum of alternatives analyzed in the draft EIS, which could reduce the environmental impacts of the action. The identified additional information, data, analyses, or discussion should be included in the final EIS.

Category 3--Inadequate
EPA does not believe that the draft EIS adequately assesses potentially significant environmental impacts of the action, or the EPA reviewer has identified new, reasonably available alternatives that are outside of the spectrum of alternatives analyzed in the draft EIS, which should be analyzed in order to reduce the potentially significant environmental impacts. EPA believes that the identified additional information, data, analyses, or discussions are of such a magnitude that they should have full public review at a draft stage. EPA does not believe that the draft EIS is adequate for the purposes of the NEPA and/or Section 309 review, and thus should be formally revised and made available for public comment in a supplemental or revised draft EIS. On the basis of the potential significant impacts involved, this proposal could be a candidate for referral to the CEQ.

*From: EPA Manual 1640 Policy and Procedures for the Review of Federal Actions Impacting the Environment

Response to Letter No. 378

378-1 Water quality will not be significantly affected by wilderness designation or non-designation. The water quality issue in this area is more germaine to grazing and was thoroughly discussed in the grazing EISs done for the Susanville District. Water quality is identified in Chapter 1 of the Final EIS as an issue considered but dropped from further analysis. Since the primary use of the WSAs is livestock grazing and the use levels are not projected to change there would be no significant change in water quality. Additionally, motorized recreation use levels currently have not created water quality problems and these use levels are not anticipated to change significantly. In those WSAs where mining would occur, the projected development sites are isolated from major water sources.

378-2 The rationale for selection of the proposed action and alternatives has been clarified in Chapter 1 of the Final EIS. A detail discussion of the decisions concerning wilderness recommendation is to be included in the Wilderness Study Report to ve completed once the EIS and Mineral Reports have been prepared.

378-3 Table 2-1 has been dropped from the Final EIS. There are no herbicide or pesticide applications proposed for the WSA's. If the areas are designated as wilderness, then there could be no herbicide reapplications on existing seedings. If areas are not designated wilderness, then potential herbicide applications would be subject to EPA regulations and would require preparation of a site-specific environmental analysis prior to treatment. However, no herbicide treatments are projected for any of the WSAs.

List of Preparers

LIST OF PRINCIPAL PREPARERS

NAME	POSITION	TEAM ASSIGNMENT	EDUCATION	EXPERIENCE
John Bosworth	Planning and Environmental Coordinator	Team Leader	BS Game Management Humboldt State U.	Natural Resource Specialist, 12 yr. with BLM
Larry Teeter	Wilderness Coordinator	Technical Coordinator	BS Forest Management Utah State U.	Forester 5 yrs. BLM Recreation Specialist 10 yrs. BLM
Roger Farschon	Wildlife Biologist	Lead Writer Cedarville WSAs	BS Conservation of Natural Resources UC Berkeley MS Range Management US Davis	Range Conservationist 2 yrs. BLM Wildlife Biologist 4 yrs. BLM
Stan Bales	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Lead Writer Eagle Lake WSAs	BS Recreation Resource Management Univ. of Utah	Outdoor Recreation Planner 4 yrs. BLM Recreation Technician 3 yrs. BLM
Sydney Stephens	Range Conservationist	Writer Eagle Lake WSAs	BS Natural Resource Management Cal Poly SLO MS Agriculture UC Davis	Range Conservationist 3 yrs.
Jonathon Foster	Environmental Coordinator	State Office Coordinator	Bachelor of Environmental Design Univ. of Colorado Masters Landscape Architecture Univ. of Massachusetts	Environmental Coordinator 1yr. BLM Landscape Architect 5 yrs. BLM 3 yrs. Private Practice

STAFF SUPPORT

Name	Specialty
Rick Cooper	Range Management
Jackie Gratton	Lands and Realty
Rob Jeffers	Range Management
Don Manual	Archaeology
Joe Mc Farlan	Minerals and Geology
Bill Phillips	Wild Horse Management
Sue Reeve	Word Processing
Gary Schoolcraft	Botany
Ron Smith	Minerals and Geology
Greg Yuncevich	Wildlife Management
Debra Becker	Word Processing, State Office
Marilyn Dillard	Word Processing, CA State Office

References

REFERENCES

Conners, R.A., et. al., 1982. Geochemical and geostatistical evaluation, Wilderness Study Areas, Winnemucca District, northwest Nevada. Prepared for BLM under contract No. YA-553-CT1-1096, by Barringer Resources Inc.

Sierra Pacific Power Company, 5-15-84. Personal communication with Stephen P. Younkin, Senior Land Use Specialist, P.O. Box 10100, Reno, NV. 89520

Sandberg, Charles A., 1983. Petroleum Potential at Wilderness Lands in Nevada, USGS Cir. 902-H. 11p.

Glossary

GLOSSARY

ANIMAL UNIT MONTH (AUM): The amount of forage required to sustain the equivalent of one cow or five sheep for one month.

AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN (ACEC): Areas within the public lands where special management attention is required (when such areas are developed or used or where no development is required) to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural, or scenic values, fish and wildlife resources or other natural systems or processes, or to protect life and safety from natural hazards.

CONTIGUOUS: Lands or legal subdivisions having a common boundary; lands having only a common corner are not contiguous.

FLPMA: The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (Public Law 94-579, 90 Stat. 2743.43 USC 1701).

IMPACT: To diminish in value or excellence.

KNOWN GEOTHERMAL RESOURCE AREA (KGRA): An area in which the geology, nearby discoveries, competitive interests, or other indicia would, in the opinion of the Secretary of the Interior, engender a belief in men who are experienced in the subject matter that the prospects for extraction of geothermal steam or associated geothermal resources are good enough to warrant expenditures of money for the purpose. (From Code of Federal Regulations (Title 43, Part 1000 to 3999, pg. 436), Office of Federal Register, Washington D.C., 1981).

LIVESTOCK GRAZING OPERATIONS: Those operations under permit where the primary purpose is the grazing of livestock for the production of food and fiber. Includes pack and saddle stock used in conjunction with such operations.

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN (MFP): The Bureau's basic planning decision document prior to the adoption of a new planning process in 1979, in which the decision document is a Resource Management Plan (RMP).

MINERAL ENTRY: The right to enter the Public Lands (under the administration of the BLM) to search for minerals and to claim or lease such minerals under the mining and mineral leasing laws and regulations.

MOTORIZED EQUIPMENT: Any machine activated by non-living power source except small battery-powered, handcarried devices such as flashlights, shavers, Geiger counters, and cameras. Also "Mechanized Equipment."

MOTOR VEHICLE: Any vehicle which is self-propelled or any vehicle which is propelled by electric power obtained from batteries.

MULTIPLE RESOURCE VALUES AND USES: The present and potential use of the various resources administered through multiple use management on the public lands and any public values associated with such uses.

MULTIPLE USE: "...the management of the public lands and their various resource values so that they are utilized in the combination that will best meet the present and future needs of the American people; making the most judicious use of the land for some or all of these resources or related services over areas large enough to provide sufficient latitude for periodic adjustments in use to conform to changing needs and conditions; the use of some lands for less than all of the resources; a combination of balanced and diverse resource uses that take into account the long-term needs of future generations for renewable and non-renewable resources, including, but not limited to, recreation, range, timber, minerals, watershed, wildlife and fish, and natural, scenic, scientific, and historical values; and harmonious and coordinated management of the various resources without permanent impairment of the productivity of the land and the quality of the environment with consideration being given to the relative values of the resources and not necessarily to the combination of uses that will give the greatest economic return or the greatest unit output." (From Section 103, FLPMA.)

NATURALNESS: Refers to an area which "generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable." (From Section 2(c), Wilderness Act.)

OFF-ROAD VEHICLE (ORV): Any motorized vehicle designed for or capable of cross-country travel on or immediately over land, water, sand, snow, ice, marsh, swampland, or other terrain.

OUTSTANDING: 1. Standing out among others of its kind; conspicuous; prominent. 2. Superior to others of its kind; distinguished; excellent.

PLANNING AREA: The area for which resources management plans are prepared and maintained. In most instances, it is the same as the resource area, which is a geographic portion of a BLM district, under supervision of an area manager.

PLANNING CRITERIA: The factors used to guide development of the resource management plan, or revision, to ensure that it is tailored to the issues previously identified and to ensure that unnecessary data collection and analyses are avoided. Planning criteria are developed to guide the collection and use of inventory data and information, the analysis of the management situation, the design and formulation of alternatives, the estimation of the effects of alternatives, the evaluation of alternatives, and the selection of the preferred alternative.

PRE-FLPMA: Before October 21, 1976, the date of approval of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act.

PRELIMINARY WILDERNESS RECOMMENDATION: Refers to a wilderness recommendation at any stage prior to the time when the Secretary of the Interior reports his recommendation to the President. Until the Secretary acts, the recommendation is "preliminary" because it is subject to change during administrative review.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION: Non-motorized and undeveloped types of outdoor recreation activities.

PUBLIC LANDS: For the purpose of the wilderness review program, any lands and interest in lands owned by the United States within the several States and administered by the Secretary of the Interior through the Bureau of Land Management, without regard to how the United States acquire ownership, except:

1. Lands where the United States owns the minerals, but surface is privately owned.

2. Lands being held for the benefit of Indians, Aleuts, and Eskimos.

3. Lands tentatively approved for State selection in Alaska.

4. Lands on the Outer Continental Shelf.

5. Oregon and California grant (O & C) lands that are managed for commercial timber production.

RANGELAND IMPROVEMENTS: Any structural or non-structural improvements which directly affect or support the use of the forage resource by domestic livestock, such as fences, line cabins, water lines, and stock tanks.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN (RMP): The basic decision document of BLM's resource management planning process, used to establish allocation and coordination among uses for the various resources within a Resource Area. An RMP is a "land-use plan" prescribed by Section 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act. RMP regulations appear in 43 CFR 1601. (Refer to definition of Management Framework Plan.)

SOLITUDE: 1. The state of being alone or remote from habitations; isolation. 2. A lonely, unfrequented, or secluded place.

SUBSTANTIALLY UNNOTICEABLE: Refers to something that either is so insignificant as to be only a very minor feature of the overall area or is not distinctly recognizable by the average visitor as being man-made or man-caused because of age, weathering, or biological change. An example of the first would be a few minor dams or abandoned mine buildings that are widely scattered over a large area, so that they are an inconspicuous part of the scene. Serious intrusions of this kind, or many of them, may preclude inclusion of the land in a wilderness study area. An example of the second would be an old juniper control project that has grown up to a natural appearance, the old fallen trees largely decomposed.

SUITABILITY: As used in the Wilderness Act and in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, refers to a recommendation by the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture that certain Federal lands satisfy the definition of wilderness in the Wilderness Act and have been found appropriate for designation as wilderness on the basis of an analysis of the existing and potential uses of the land.

WILDERNESS: The definition contained in Section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 891).

WILDERNESS AREA: An area formally designated by an Act of Congress as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System.

WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS: The definition contained in Section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 891).

WILDERNESS INVENTORY: An evaluation of the public lands in the form of a written description and map showing those lands that meet the wilderness criteria as established under Section 603(a) of FLPMA and Section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act, which will be referred to as Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs).

WILDERNESS MANAGEMENT: The management of human use and influence on lands which have been designated by an Act of Congress as wilderness areas.

WILDERNESS PROGRAM: Term used to describe all wilderness activities of the Bureau of Land Management including identification, management, and administrative functions.

WILDERNESS RECOMMENDATIONS: A recommendation by the Bureau of Land Management, the Secretary of the Interior, or the President, with respect to an area's suitability or non-suitability for preservation as wilderness.

WILDERNESS REPORTING: The process of preparing the reports containing wilderness recommendations on wilderness study areas and transmitting those reports to the Secretary of the Interior, the President, and Congress.

WILDERNESS REVIEW: The term used to cover the entire wilderness inventory study and reporting phases of the wilderness program of the Bureau of Land Management.

WILDERNESS STUDY: The process that specifies how each wilderness study area must be studied through the BLM resource management planning system, analyzing all resources, values and uses within the WSA to determine whether the area will be recommended as suitable or non-suitable for wilderness designation.

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA (WSA): A roadless area or island that has been inventories and found to have wilderness characteristics as described in Section 603 of FLPMA and Section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 891).

WILDLIFE IMPROVEMENTS: Any structural or non-structural improvements which directly affect or support the use of water, food, or shelter by wildlife, such a guzzlers, water lines, or fences.

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Appendix

IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior

8500
CA-930.1

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
CALIFORNIA STATE OFFICE
2800 Cottage Way
Sacramento, California 95825

MAY 6 1986

Mr. Gail Kobetich, Project Leader
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Sacramento Endangered Species Office
2800 Cottage Way
Sacramento, CA 95825

Dear Mr. Kobetich:

The U.S. Bureau of Land Management in California is preparing eleven final Wilderness EIS's during fiscal year 1986 that will analyze the environmental impacts of wilderness designation or non-designation on a total of 58 Wilderness Study Areas (WSA's). We hereby initiate informal consultation pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act concerning this matter.

Some of these WSA's provide important habitat for federally listed or proposed endangered species (for example, Peregrine Falcons and Bald Eagles). It has been determined by the BLM that the designation or non-designation of these areas as wilderness by Congress (at the recommendation of the BLM) will have only incidental benefit to any threatened or endangered species involved, not significant positive or negative effects.

We seek your concurrence that these wilderness designations or non-designations do not themselves require formal Section 7 consultation, but that such consultation must be initiated prior to on-the-ground implementation of activities which may affect threatened or endangered species under wilderness or non-wilderness designations.

Your prompt reply will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Ed Hastey
State Director

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

SACRAMENTO ENDANGERED SPECIES OFFICE
2800 Cottage Way, Room E-1823
Sacramento, California 95825-1846

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May 9, 1986

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mr. Ed Hastey, State Director, Bureau of Land Management, California State Office, 2800 Cottage Way Sacramento, California 95825

FROM: Project Leader, Endangered Species Office, Sacramento, California 95825

SUBJECT: Consultation requirements for BLM Wilderness Designation 8500 (CA-930.1) (Case No. 1-1-86-I-321)

In response to your May 6, 1986, request for informal consultation regarding designation or non-designation of wilderness status for Wilderness Study Areas (WSA's), we concur with your statement that this process does not require formal Section 7 consultation. Any future actions on WSA's that might affect a listed species can be evaluated at proposal stage and formal consultations initiated if needed.

If you have questions regarding this reply please contact me at FTS/460-4866.

Gail C. Kobetich

cc: Chief, Endangered Species, Portland, OR 97232 (AFA-SE)

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